

Greece stops Iraqi-bound truck

ATHENS (R) — A truck headed for Iraq with a 29.5-ton "weapons system" was detained in the western port of Patras Thursday, a Greek Finance Ministry statement said Friday. Police sources said the equipment was thought to be part of a "superjet" which Britain has accused Iraq of trying to assemble. The ministry statement said the driver's documents showed the cargo was a steel tube it was in fact "a weapons system" which required special documents. A police spokesman in Athens said the truck picked up the shipment in Britain and arrived in Greece via Italy Thursday night. In Britain, a spokesman for the company which made eight steel tubes said by British customs last week on the grounds they would form a massive cannon, said he assumed the shipment was "military equipment for the same Iraqi contract." Britain says Iraq planned to build a massive gun with a 40-metre barrel. Iraq says the pipes were intended for a petrochemical complex.

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Jordan, bankers continue debt talks

LONDON (AP) — Jordan and its main creditor banks have held further on finalising a \$580-million debt rescheduling package, although banking sources say an agreement isn't likely until around midyear. Finance Minister Rami Jarrah this week met with bankers in London primarily over documentation requirements drafted by the six-bank creditors' committee. Sources said it was the first time Jordan was presented with specific documentation proposals by the banks and that further talks were likely before technical details were set of the 11-year rescheduling. Jordan's total commercial bank debt is \$1.4 billion. Bankers estimate that it will be mid-May at the earliest before the rescheduling pact is ratified by Jordan's creditor banks, although a number of bankers said a June signing looks more likely. They noted that Jordan has warned banks that it may be forced to delay some, if not all of its initial 1990 interest payment due at month's end. The warning, along with some opposition to a \$50-million new money component in the proposed rescheduling, is helping to slow movement towards ratification by the more than 60 creditor banks affected.

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3 Israeli soldiers sentenced in bread case

TEL AVIV (AP) — A religious soldier has been jailed for threatening to shoot two fellow soldiers whose sin was eating bread during passover and making scathing remarks about a leading rabbi, the army said Friday. The devout soldier was sentenced to 28 days in the stockade for his threat, and the other two were given 14 days each for mocking the religious beliefs of a fellow soldier, an army spokesman said. The army bars the eating of bread on army bases during the eight-day holiday. The confrontation came at a base in central Israel where the three soldiers were talking politics, Israeli newspapers and radio reported. When the two secular soldiers criticised Rabbi Eliezer Schach and began eating bread, the religious soldier cocked his gun and threatened to shoot his two comrades. The two secular soldiers calmed him down.

Bonn protests to Ankara over diplomats

BONN (R) — West Germany protested to Turkey Friday over Ankara's demand that Bonn withdraw eight diplomats from its embassy there. On the orders of Foreign Minister Hans-Dietrich Genscher, Turkish Ambassador Resat Arin was summoned to the ministry to receive the formal protest from state secretary Juergen Sudhoff. According to the Foreign Ministry, Sudhoff told Arin that the move was not in the interests of West German-Turkish ties and could result in work at Bonn's Ankara mission practically grinding to a halt. The Turkish demand that Bonn withdraw eight diplomats was in apparent retaliation for West Germany's request that 15 Turkish diplomats be called home. The 15 were suspected of spying on Turks living in West Germany who were critical of the Ankara government.

Britain offers ties with Albania

LONDON (R) — Britain Friday renewed an offer made to Albania 10 years ago to restore diplomatic relations with the Communist state without preconditions. "There have recently been increasing signs that Albania wishes to play a fuller part in the international community," the Foreign Office said in a statement. It expressed regret that Albanian President Ramiz Alia did not include Britain when he dropped opposition to restoring diplomatic ties with Moscow and Washington Thursday. "We also note that Mr. Alia, in his remarks, makes no reference to Britain's generous offer 10 years ago, to restore diplomatic relations without preconditions. We hope the change in Albania's general tone will lead them to look at our offer," the statement said.

Bangladesh wins \$1.8 billion aid pledge

PARIS (R) — International donors have pledged aid totalling at least \$1.8 billion for Bangladesh during the 1990-91 financial year, Bangladesh Finance and Planning Minister Mohammad Abdul Munim said Friday. He was speaking at a news conference after a two-day, World Bank-sponsored meeting of donors in Paris called to assist the flood and famine hit South Asian nation.

Czechoslovakia changes its name again

PRAGUE (R) — Czechoslovakia's parliament changed the country's official name for the second time in three weeks Friday, but only after a recount in parliament. The country will now be known as "the Czech and Slovak Federative Republic," a compromise designed to end months of argument between Czechoslovakia's two constituent parts. A first vote in the House of Nations, one of parliament's two chambers, approved the new name and was declared valid.

King in S. Arabia for Omra, talks with Fahd

JEDDAH (Agencies) — His Majesty King Hussein arrived in the Red Sea port of Jeddah from Amman Friday to visit holy places in Saudi Arabia and perform Omra. The Saudi Press agency (SPA) gave no other details about the monarch's visit to Saudi Arabia, expected to last two days. In Amman, an official said King Hussein would have talks with Saudi Arabia's King Fahd on Middle East peace prospects and financial assistance to Jordan. Other topics include the possibility of convening an Arab summit to offset an influx of Soviet Jews to Israel, the official said.

King Fahd was present in Mecca for the final days of the Holy Month of Ramadan. King Hussein received in Jeddah by the governor of Mecca, Prince Majed, and Oil Minister Hisham Nazer. The King was to speed from the port city to Mecca to break the Ramadan fast with King Fahd together before holding their talks. Accompanying the King were His Royal Highness Prince Faisal, Prime Minister Mudar Badran, Royal Court Chief Sharif Zeid Ben Shaker, Political Adviser Adnan Abu Odeh and Foreign Minister Marwan Al Qasem.

King Hussein's visit to Saudi Arabia came on the heels of his talks with Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) Leader Yasser Arafat on the Middle East peace process. King Hussein and Arafat have been leading Arab calls for an emergency Arab summit conference to discuss means of arresting the Soviet Jewish influx into Israel. The expected influx of hundreds of thousands of Soviet Jews has sparked outrage in the Arab World, where it is feared many of them could settle in the Israeli-occupied territories.

Palestinians stage Ramadan strike

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (AP) — Shops and offices were closed in the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip in a strike called by Islamic fundamentalists on the final Friday of the fasting month of Ramadan. Leaders of the Palestinian uprising also called for new tactics in the 28-month revolt, including using general strikes as "confrontation days with Israel authorities." In the past, most Palestinians have stayed home during strikes, often making them calmer than other days in the occupied territories. In Friday's strike, the Islamic fundamentalist movement Hamas allowed taxis and buses to work carrying Muslims to Friday prayer services, especially at Jerusalem's Al Aqsa Mosque. The strike also closed business in Arab Jerusalem.

Court allows settlers to stay at St. John's Hospice

TEL AVIV (Agencies) — Israel's supreme court Friday allowed Jewish settlers to stay in a compound in the Christian quarter of Jerusalem's Old City, temporarily setting aside an eviction order by the attorney general. The 150 settlers can remain in the four 100-year-old buildings near the Church of the Holy Sepulcher until the high court hears more arguments next week on an appeal for the settlers to remain in the compound. Attorney General Yosef Harish Thursday had ordered their immediate eviction from the 72-room St. John's Hospice, owned by the Greek Orthodox Church. Harish said he wanted to prevent further deterioration of Jewish-Christian relations in the city. The April 11 move by the settlers into the Christian quarter sparked angry protests by Christians and Muslims who fear that the group is heading a drive to eventually push all Palestinians out of the Old City.

After the high court allowed the settlers to stay, a half dozen Greek Orthodox priests carrying candles staged a protest vigil outside the complex. Black flags fluttered from the Holy Sepulcher and the Greek Orthodox Patriarchate. In Friday's hearing, the supreme court made no reference to the religious and political dimensions of the case. Chief Justice Meir Shamgar scheduled a hearing for next Thursday during which Harish must show why his immediate eviction order should not be annulled. "The settlers will be allowed to stay until there is a final decision by the high court," said Attorney Dan Avid-Yitzhak, who represents the Paoama-based company, SBC, which leased the building to the settlers. SBC claims it gave Martyros Matossian, an Armenian who has

Peres races to enlist rabbis' support

TEL AVIV (R) — A race for the blessing of key rabbis quickened Friday as Israel's rival political leaders pursued an unholy scramble to form a government. But most indications pointed to a continued stalemate that may force caretaker Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir's right-wing Likud Party and the more dovish Labour Party of Shimon Peres to revive their shattered "national unity" coalition. Peres asked Rabbi Ovadia Yosef, spiritual mentor of the Shas religious faction, to let Labour form a government committed to peace talks with Palestinians, a cause Yosef has espoused. Shas's five votes may be crucial to breaking a 60-60 deadlock in the 120-seat Knesset (parliament), where religious parties hold the balance of power.

"We had a deep and detailed conversation... we asked for time to study things and we will wait for his reply," Peres told reporters after they met. But the Labour leader's time is running out. President Chaim Herzog has given Peres until next Thursday to form a government and is otherwise likely to ask Shamir to try. Peres was heartened by the surprise return of Rabbi Avraham Verdiger to the Labour camp Thursday, barely a week after he said he would quit parliament rather than back a Labour-led government dependent on Arab deputies. Bot Verdiger's fellow rebel from the ultra-orthodox Agudat Israel party, Rabbi Eliezer Mizrahi, whose defection robbed Peres of a majority last week, met Shamir Friday and reaffirmed

Door wide open for Jordan and PLO to increase political coordination

By P.V. Vivekanand
Jordan Times Staff Writer

AMMAN — The most significant outcome of last week's talks between Jordanian and Palestinian officials is the revitalisation of a joint political committee to review a wide range of political issues and coordinate positions, according to a senior Jordanian official. Dismissing speculation that the central theme of the talks was a formula for Jordanian-Palestinian confederation, the official asserted that "this round of talks produced very practical results, and the door is now open for further consolidation of Jordanian-Palestinian cooperation in various administrative and practical issues." The joint committee was set up in 1985 co-chaired by the Jordanian foreign minister and a member of the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) Executive Committee, and had been dormant over the years following the collapse of the Feb. 11, 1985 Jordan-PLO

agreement on political coordination. The revived committee is co-chaired by Foreign Minister Marwan Al Qasem and PLO Executive Committee member Mahmoud Mazen, the Jordanian official told reporters Thursday, speaking on condition of anonymity. The official explained that reviving the committee meant that "the full range of issues of mutual interest could be discussed," with a view to increasing cooperation between the two sides and clearing the way for creating new joint institutions in addition to the already established panel for coordination in the field of information. This panel is co-chaired by Information Minister Ibrahim Izzeddin and PLO Executive Committee member Yasser Abed Rabbo. Another joint committee to support the steadfastness of the Palestinian people living in the occupied territories has been dormant for the past two years, mainly due to lack of funds to support its activities in extending aid to the occupied lands. It

was supposed to have received an annual Arah aid of \$150 million under a resolution adopted at the 1978 Arah summit held in Baghdad but some of the designated donor states did not live up to the commitment. However, the official said Thursday that "there are signs of renewed Arah assistance to the panel." He did not elaborate. According to the official, moves are under study to further "make life easier for the people of West Bank and Gaza Strip" in terms of their travel and residence in Jordan as well as the entry to and transit of agricultural produce from the occupied territories through the Kingdom. The official dismissed reports suggesting that a "working paper" enshrining the concept of a Jordanian-Palestinian confederation was discussed between His Majesty King Hussein and Yasser Arafat during the visit last week of the PLO chairman, who left Amman early Thursday.

"Several ideas and concepts for Jordanian-Palestinian cooperation and coordination could have been raised, but nothing was discussed in the form of a document," the official emphasised. Reports quoting senior PLO officials had appeared in the local press prior to Arafat's visit that the King and the PLO leader would discuss future Jordanian-Palestinian relations within a framework which explicitly defined the form of a Jordanian-Palestinian confederation. "The emphasis was on real and practical means and issues governing Jordanian-Palestinian political cooperation," the official told reporters Thursday. "It is well understood that any future Jordanian-Palestinian relations will be based on the concept of two states," he added. Other Jordanian officials have also dismissed talk of an immediate

(Continued on page 3)

PLO authorises Arafat to seek Arab summit

BAGHDAD (Agencies) — The Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) Friday called for an emergency Arab summit to discuss the immigration of Soviet Jews to Israel and threats against Iraq. Azzam Al Ahmad, the PLO's representative in Baghdad, told the Associated Press that the 15-man Executive Committee met in an overnight session under Chairman Yasser Arafat. He said the committee agreed that an emergency Arab summit was necessary at this stage "to confront the influx of Soviet Jews, Israeli threats against Iraq and to escalate" the Palestinian uprising.

Western reports have suggested Iraq was trying to build nuclear weapons. Iraq and other Arab countries said the reports were part of a campaign aimed at preparing the international public opinion for an attack against Iraqi sites. The Iraqi News Agency (INA) said Arafat and the PLO officials supported Iraq's warning last week to use chemical weapons against Israel in the case of an Israeli attack against Iraqi installations. INA quoted Arafat as saying that Iraqi President Saddam Hussein's warning was "an assurance of a long-awaited Arab deterrence in the face of Israeli arrogance and American hegemony." Ahmad said Arafat and the PLO leaders were to hold a meeting with Iraqi Foreign Minister Tariq Aziz later Friday for further consultations on current Arab issues. He said the executive commit-

tee authorised Arafat to contact Arab leaders on the need to convene the emergency Arab summit soon. Arafat arrived Thursday from Amman, where he discussed with His Majesty King Hussein the Arab summit issue. He is expected to fly to Saudi Arabia Saturday for similar talks. Ahmad said the Palestinian leader would ask the Arab countries to provide "full military, political and economic support for the intifada." He said the PLO would submit to the Arab League headquarters in Tunis an official request for an urgent summit. Arab diplomats said the PLO would propose Baghdad as a venue. The PLO executive committee, in a statement released in Tunis after the meeting in Baghdad, said Friday: "Holding an Arab summit is an urgent necessity to bring together Arab resources to protect national security and prevent the dangers which threaten the Arab Homeland." "The summit (is needed) to confront... the threats against Iraq, face up to the danger of immigration, provide real backing to the intifada... and affirm support for the Palestinian peace initiative," it added. The PLO statement said Iraq's increasing strength gave important moral support to the intifada. The PLO statement said the United States should let in more of the Soviet emigrants and European countries should make it easier for the Jews to settle where they wanted.

Irfan Sultan elected president of dentists

By Mariam M. Shahin
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — A technical detail in voting regulations led to an uproar and subsequent repolling in Friday's presidential election of the executive committee of the Jordanian Dentists Association (JDA), which left Irfan Sultan of the "less-politicised" of the two "independent" candidates, as the victor. The 25th election of Jordan's oldest professional association was marked by a recount of the 368 ballots cast after none of the two candidates managed to secure a clear 50 per cent of the votes. Sultan received 184 votes while his opponent and incumbent JDA president Ishak Khairi received 174. Ten ballots were blank. Although observers originally attributed the blank votes to a politically oriented group of dentists, one of those who said he had cast a blank vote denied the insinuation and said some people simply did not approve of either presidential candidate. The rules of the association state that any presidential candidate must receive exactly 50 per cent or more of the number of ballots cast. That left Sultan one ballot short of victory. In an immediate repolling, only 238 ballots were cast and Sultan came far ahead of Khairi with 140 votes against 98. Full results, determining the remaining seven members of the executive committee were expected to be announced after 12 midnight Friday. The significance of Sultan's victory over Khairi was seen as multi-fold by long-time association observers. Khairi was seen as both a professional dentist and a politically active citizen while Sultan was considered by all of the people who spoke to the Jordan Times, including his supporters, as "entirely professional with no political inclinations or links." His victory over Khairi would indicate that the JDA, unlike all other professional associations in the Kingdom, has not only failed to form election lists and clear political alliances but also voted to a non-politicised figure to lead the association. Although the character of the association as such will not be clear until the rest of the committee is elected, the lack of clear factional allegiances seemed clear as different politicised groups campaigned for different candidates. "Like all other professional associations in Jordan this union has political undercurrents but officially only the Islamists and the Muslim Brotherhood had openly said where they belong on the political barometer," said one long-time observer. "There are more than 15 pan-Arabist and leftist trends in the union but their adherents are not committed and thus it is almost impossible to say how they would vote," he added.

Algerian fundamentalists demand parliament dissolution

ALGIERS (R) — Tens of thousands of Muslim fundamentalists marched peacefully on the presidential palace Friday to demand that President Chadli Benjedid dissolve parliament within three months. "I greet you, the Algerian people, in this historic gathering, to remind you that you are a Muslim people," Islamic Salvation Front (FIS) leader Abassi Madani told a massive, silent rally in front of the palace gates. Tens of thousands of mostly bearded young men streamed out of mosques after Friday prayers and filed up tree-lined central boulevards in orderly groups, guided by FIS marshals. Banners attacked parliament, entirely composed of deputies from the ruling National Liberation Front (FLN), as a den of "wolves and thieves." They called on Benjedid to dissolve parliament by July. Another demand read out at

the rally included of a multi-party commission to supervise June local elections, the first free poll in Algeria since independence in 1962. The FIS is the main challenger to the FLN in the elections, called after youth riots in October 1988 forced in FLN to abandon a 27-year-old system of one-party rule. After an FIS delegation was received at the palace the marchers dispersed without incident. Fears of violence receded after the FLN postponed a planned counter-demonstration in Algiers in response to appeals from senior religious leaders and opposition parties. A memorandum read out to the crowd by FIS official Ali Jeddi said in apparent reference to Benjedid, who has sought to move the country toward a Western-style democracy, "the leader of a Muslim people must abide by Islam."

The National Assembly, elected in 1987, is not due for reelection until 1992 and only the president can dissolve it. The FIS demanded that an election monitoring committee be composed of representatives of political parties, the constitutional council and local administrators. The FLN organised marches at the same time elsewhere in the country to protest the political exploitation of mosques and fundamentalists. But their numbers appeared vastly inferior to the fundamentalist march. The Algerian news agency APS said that about 100 FLN supporters demonstrated in the western city of Oran, carrying banners that included such slogans as "No to the use of mosques for political and electoral ends." Other FLN protests took place in Annaba, Al Tarf, Skikda, Souk-Ahras, Guelma and Tebessa, but APS gave no figures.

Vilnius urges compromise but troops storm printing plant

VILNIUS, Soviet Union (Agencies) — Former Lithuanian President Algirdas Brazauskas urged compromise with Moscow Friday, but tensions in the rebel republic flared with a Soviet army assault on a printing plant. About 50 Soviet paratroops forced their way into a Vilnius printing plant about 1 p.m. and beat up several workers but failed to evict them. Thousands of onlookers jeered and chanted "fascists, fascists." Algimantas Cekolis, a senior member of the Lithuanian Communist Party which runs the plant, said 12 workers were injured, three badly. One member of parliament, Zigmantas Vaisvila, was among the injured. The raid came as the Baltic republic braced for the full effects of an energy blockade, imposed by the Kremlin in its latest bid to force Lithuania to renounce its independence drive launched on March 11. A senior Lithuanian govern-

ment minister accused the Kremlin of starting to block food deliveries to the republic. "We have received telegrammed documents that confirm that not only oil and gas but also food products have been diverted from Lithuania," Deputy Prime Minister Romualdas Ozolas told a news conference. Ozolas said two ships from Cuba carrying raw sugar for Lithuania had been diverted away from the republic's port, Kleipeda. He said supplies of fish from the neighbouring Republic of Latvia, intended for Lithuania, had been sent to another destination. "We cannot speak about some misunderstanding," Ozolas said. "I am sure this is a part of a complex of measures that can be called a blockade. I also fear that the range of these measures can be expanded." Brazauskas, also chairman of the parliament's emergency emer-

gency committee, said many Lithuanian factories would have to close not only because of fuel shortages but because Soviet factories also have cut supplies of goods and raw materials ranging from tyres to electric motors, cables and packaging. This will undoubtedly lead to great unemployment and some factories are considering giving workers early vacations, he said. Brazauskas, an economic manager by training, was head of the republic's government until the pro-secession Sajudis movement won control in February elections and declared independence from Moscow on March 11. Last December he split his republican party from Moscow and won approval of many Lithuanian nationalists. But deputies of the supreme council, Lithuania's parliament, accused him Friday of trying to slow the breakaway republic's independence drive.

Walesa wins union backing

GDANSK (AP) — Lech Walesa won an overwhelming vote of confidence from Solidarity's second national congress Friday after delivering an impassioned defence of his 10 years as union leader. "I am not the wisest guy but we are wise because we now have a democracy," Walesa told the congress. Delegates responded with a vote of 357 in favour, one against and 22 abstentions when Walesa called for a show of support for his personal leadership and that of the national commission that runs Solidarity. The address came on the second day of Solidarity's second congress. Since the first one in 1981, the movement has survived martial law, a negotiated end to Communism, and two elections to the government of the country. Recent public opinion polls, however, show Walesa's popularity as Poland's leader an anachronism in a free society with increased unemployment.

Lebanese Shi'ite leader says release of hostage is certain

BEIRUT (Agencies) — A Shi'ite Muslim leader reputed to pull weight with kidnappers holding three American professors said Friday the release of one captive was certain despite U.S. "arrogant, cowboy behaviour."

Hussein Musawi, who heads a pro-Syrian wing within the Iranian-backed Hizbollah, or Party of God, spoke in a telephone interview with the Associated Press.

"The delay is certain, the complications are certain, but the release is also certain," he said.

Musawi said the delay was caused by Washington's rejection of the kidnappers' key demand — that Assistant Secretary of State for the Near East John Kelly fly to Damascus, Syria, to finalise the release.

"But Kelly's failure to respond is not going to cancel the release. The hostage might be released in another manner, maybe dialogue. I cannot speculate further. I can't lie," Musawi said.

Asked when he expected the release to take place, he said: "That depends on how far-sighted the Americans might become. So far, their behaviour is arrogant and one of cowboy mentality."

"If someone decides to return a hostage, the other side is supposed to take the hostage," Musawi said.

Musawi heads Islamic Amal, or Islamic Hope, a faction within Hizbollah that advocates strong links with Syria.

He is believed to be the mentor of the underground Islamic Jihad for the Liberation of Palestine. The group holds professors Alan Steen, a native of Boston, who turns 51 Sunday, Jesse Turner, 42, of Boise, Idaho, and Robert Polhill, 55, of New York.

The three were kidnapped from the campus of the U.S.-affiliated Beirut University College on Jan. 24, 1987, by gunmen posing as riot police.

Islamic Jihad for the Liberation of Palestine said Wednesday it would free a hostage in 48 hours. But another statement released Thursday said U.S. refusal to dispatch Kelly to Syria had "frustrated the release... (and) made us postpone this operation until the picture is cleared."

The kidnappers said Kelly's presence in Damascus was needed to "coordinate some final steps to guarantee success" of the release.

U.S. President George Bush said: "The United States does not knuckle under the demands."

U.S. ambassador to Syria, Edward Djerejian, flew back to Damascus Thursday. He and Kelly had been at a meeting of U.S. diplomats in West Germany.

Bush said the United States has "been disappointed before" by dashed hopes for the release of American hostages and stressed that he will not meet the kidnappers' demands.

Informed sources in Damascus, speaking on condition of anonymity, confirmed the problem with the hostage-release centered on whether Kelly, the former U.S. ambassador to Lebanon, would go to Damascus.

Syrian Foreign Minister Farouk Al Sharaa said his government has "been exerting a great deal of influence" to secure the hostage release by Sunday. He would not elaborate.

The kidnappers said they hoped in the meantime that Brig.-Gen. Ghazi Kenaan of Syria "will head to Beirut to wrap up the issue upon the arrival of Kelly in Damascus."

Kenaan is Syria's military intelligence chief in Lebanon, where the Syrians have 40,000 troops deployed. He has played a key role in several hostage releases in Beirut.

Despite public denials, Musawi is believed to be at odds with the Iranian-backed leadership of Hizbollah under Sheikh Sobhi Tofaili.

Hizbollah is believed to be the umbrella for pro-Iranian extremists holding most of the 18 Western hostages in Lebanon. These include the professors, five other Americans, four Britons, two West Germans, an Irishman and an Italian.

The longest held Western captive is American journalist Terry Anderson, 42. He was kidnapped on March 16, 1985.

M.T. Mehdi, president of the American-Arab Relations Com-

mittee in New York, said in a statement that the United States "furnished" the opportunity to help release a hostage.

The kidnappers' last statement was accompanied by an instant photograph of Polhill. It was delivered to the Beirut newspaper An Nabar and to a Western news agency.

The photograph of Polhill showed him wearing glasses, leaning against a white wall and looking into the camera. He wore a dark, V-necked sweatshirt and had a trimmed grey beard.

Polhill's Lebanese wife, Feryal, told the Associated Press by telephone: "I don't feel comfortable about it. It seems they're manoeuvring. I think he looks fine in the picture, better than he looked in previous ones."

The last picture of Polhill was released on March 15.

The latest statement also repeated a threat the group made last month to attack carriers used to transport Soviet Jews to Israel and airports facilitating their emigration.

"The organisation serves this final warning... on all those participating in this matter, especially those countries offering transit facilities," the statement said.

"This is the last warning. All civilians should stay away from the airports, airlines and jetliners that will be the targets for operations mounted at times we deem adequate."

The threat was first issued on March 15 in a statement.

Sharaa has expressed confidence that the kidnappers will release an American hostage by Saturday or Sunday, the New York Times reported Friday.

"We have been exerting a great deal of effort with the Iranians to secure the release of the American hostages by Saturday or Sunday," the newspaper quoted the foreign minister as saying.

The paper reported from Damascus that the Syrian official made his prediction after meeting the U.S. ambassador to Syria, Edward Djerejian.

It said Djerejian declined to comment on the meeting, or on a Palestinian official's assertions that U.S. officials met in Damascus earlier this month with the brother of Iranian President Ali Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani and agreed on the release of the hostages.

He said the strike was inadvertent. The Stark, a guided missile frigate, was protecting shipping lanes in the Gulf at the height of the 1980-88 Iran-Iraq war.

The Anderson-Van Atta column described the Iraqi leader as furious at the time over official U.S. neutrality in the Iran-Iraq war and incensed over White House admissions in November 1986 that the United States had sold anti-tank and anti-aircraft weapons to Iran.

"Hussein ordered the deliberate attack on a U.S. ship, which had to appear accidental, according to our sources. To be certain of success two planes were sent," the report said.

The report was the latest in a recent series from official and unofficial Western sources that have tarred Hussein and Iraq. Last month, Britain and the United States accused Iraq of trying to smuggle U.S.-made devices to trigger nuclear bombs.

Last week, British customs officials stopped the export to Iraq of steel pipes which some military experts said could be used to build a giant artillery piece.

Meanwhile a U.S. hostage-debriefing team arrived at the U.S. Air Force's Rhein Main base in West Germany Thursday night, hoping Lebanese kidnappers will soon free a U.S. captive.

"There will be no press coverage upon arrival. Reporters will not be let in," said a U.S. diplomat on condition of anonymity.

The 13-member team, consisting of medical and debriefing personnel, will likely be taken to the U.S. military hospital in Wiesbaden, he said.

Earlier in the day, U.S. Secretary of State James Baker announced the team was en route to West Germany after hearing "statements of imminent release" of a U.S. hostage in Lebanon.

In years past, other U.S. hostages have been brought to the Wiesbaden hospital for debriefing and medical examinations before flying back to the United States.

Relatives saddened after postponement

Relatives of Americans held hostage in Lebanon reacted with weary sadness to the news Thursday that the release of one of the captives had been indefinitely postponed.

"I've had my hopes shattered so many times in the past three and a half years that I cannot say that it was unexpected," Polhill's mother, Ruth Polhill of Fishkill, New York, said in a telephone interview.

"Nothing has come on the dates they say it would be coming," she said.

The group holds Polhill, Jesse Turner, and Alan Steen, but didn't say which one it had planned to release.

"Regardless of which of the men is going to be released, I will be happy," Mrs. Polhill said. "But it looks like a long haul."

"We're very sad," Steen's mother-in-law, Dorothy Rose of Clark Lake, Michigan, said in an interview with Detroit television station WDIV-TV. "You have your hopes up any time something like this happens."

"It gives me a very bad let-down," Turner's mother, Estelle Rönneberg, said in a telephone interview in Boise, Idaho. "I may not go as high and as low as I used to, but it's still hard. ... This seemed to be the time he was going to be released."

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Policeman killed in attack on Coptic church in Egypt

CAIRO (AP) — Attackers threw explosive devices at a Coptic Orthodox Church in a southern village, killing a police sergeant guarding the church, a senior security officer said Friday.

It was the first fatality in weeks of simmering violence involving attacks on churches and Christian-owned property in southern Egypt.

Brigadier Ahmad Galal said the identities and motives of the assailants were unknown. More than 200 alleged Muslim extremists were arrested after the previous incidents in the area.

Galal, speaking by telephone from security headquarters in the provincial capital Fayoum, 96 kilometres southwest of Cairo, said the latest attack occurred early Thursday night in a village west of Fayoum called Sanhour.

He said the church was not damaged.

The Cairo newspaper Al Akhbar said it happened at Ifar, at dusk when Muslims traditionally break their daylong fasts during the holy month of Ramadan, which ends next week.

Fayoum has been a centre of violence by fundamentalist Muslim militants for years. It is the hometown of Sheikh Omar

Abdul Rahman, a blind preacher widely acknowledged as leader of Al Gamaa Al Islamiya, the Muslim group. The loosely organised association demands immediate implementation of Sharia, the 1,400-year-old Islamic religious and ethical code.

Galal said an undetermined number of attackers hurled explosive devices at the church entrance where policemen stood guard. "A police sergeant died, but there was no damage to the church," he said.

He said because police had no clues to the assailants' identities, it was not possible to say whether they were Muslim extremists.

Galal also could not confirm newspaper reports that the assailants fired several shots at the police guards.

The government has assigned guards to Egypt's approximately 1,500 churches since an upsurge of Islamic militancy in the late 1970s that culminated in the 1981 assassination of President Anwar Sadat by Muslim extremists.

Of Egypt's 55 million people, 5 million to 6 million are Christians, almost all Orthodox Copts. The Evangelist St. Mark founded the Coptic Church in A.D. 40.

U.S. dismisses claims that Stark attack was deliberate

WASHINGTON (R) — The United States has dismissed as groundless a report that President Saddam Hussein ordered the 1987 missile attack by an Iraqi pilot that killed 37 U.S. sailors on the USS Stark.

"We've seen this report and it is without foundation," State Department spokeswoman Margaret Tutwiler said at the daily news briefing.

Syndicated columnists Jack Anderson and Dale Van Atta, citing CIA documents, Iraqi sources and Arab leaders close to Hussein, claimed in a report Thursday the strike was not an accident but ordered by Hussein.

"The CIA has collected evidence that Iraqi President Saddam Hussein may have paid a \$35,000 reward and allowed the use of a late model Mercedes Benz to the Iraqi pilot responsible for the 'accidental' missile attack in 1987 on the USS Stark," the report said.

The Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), citing its official policy of not commenting on such reports, referred reporters to the State Department statement.

The United States protested against the May 17, 1987, attack but accepted Iraq's apologies and

its claim that the strike was inadvertent. The Stark, a guided missile frigate, was protecting shipping lanes in the Gulf at the height of the 1980-88 Iran-Iraq war.

The Anderson-Van Atta column described the Iraqi leader as furious at the time over official U.S. neutrality in the Iran-Iraq war and incensed over White House admissions in November 1986 that the United States had sold anti-tank and anti-aircraft weapons to Iran.

"Hussein ordered the deliberate attack on a U.S. ship, which had to appear accidental, according to our sources. To be certain of success two planes were sent," the report said.

The report was the latest in a recent series from official and unofficial Western sources that have tarred Hussein and Iraq. Last month, Britain and the United States accused Iraq of trying to smuggle U.S.-made devices to trigger nuclear bombs.

Last week, British customs officials stopped the export to Iraq of steel pipes which some military experts said could be used to build a giant artillery piece.

'Prisoners held 5 years without trial in Khiam'

LONDON (AP) — Some inmates at an Israeli prison in southern Lebanon have been held there for up to five years without trial, according to a report Friday in the Independent.

The London newspaper said some had been detained for months in total darkness and solitary confinement at the prison on a hilltop above the Christian village of Khiam in Israel's occupation zone.

It quoted unnamed ex-prisoners as saying suspected guerrillas held there had been tortured by having electric wires attached to their bodies and that some had received savage beatings.

The story from Khiam by reporter Robert Fisk named one present inmate as Selma Salam, 23, an interpreter for the United Nations' Norwegian battalion in southern Lebanon.

It said three gunmen in plain clothes took her away in a car from her home at the Shi'ite Muslim village of Blat last July 11.

It said her widowed mother had not been allowed to visit her and that her U.N. employers had sought in vain for information about her from the Israelis and from Israel's proxy South Lebanon Army (SLA) militia.

Fisk said neither the International Red Cross nor Amnesty International nor any other humanitarian organisation had been allowed to visit the prison, which he said was guarded by the SLA.

"Israel has refused the Red Cross permission to visit the jail on the grounds that it is controlled by the SLA — but since the Israelis themselves control the SLA, Red Cross officials have privately told the Independent that they believe Israel's excuse is unacceptable," Fisk reported.

He added: "In Khiam, I saw Israeli military vehicles driving past the prison. Under international law, an occupying army is responsible for activities carried out in its area of control. Former prisoners... claim that while blindfolded and under interrogation they have heard Israelis speaking in Hebrew."

He said kidnappers of Western hostages in Lebanon had repeatedly demanded the release of Khiam prisoners.

He said an estimated 325 men and women were held in the prison. He said some were there because they were suspected of anti-Israeli guerrilla activities, others because their families sympathised with the Lebanese resistance Movement.

Fisk said the Israelis had suspended all family visits to the prison since the spring of last year.

He added: "Neither the Israelis nor the SLA provide lists of inmates, nor will they allow the Red Cross to compile such a list. But the Independent has acquired the names of 58 prisoners, all of whom come from just seven small villages in the far southeast of Lebanon. Two men — one 25, the other 30 — have been incarcerated in Khiam for five years."

"United Nations records show that they were originally escorted there not only by SLA men but by plain clothes Israeli Shin Bet agents. A 20-year-old has been held since January 1987, and 20 others since 1988."

"The SLA admitted that two prisoners were killed last year 'while trying to escape.' United Nations officers have been told they were asphyxiated with tear gas during a riot."

House Republicans slam Dole for criticising Jerusalem resolution

WASHINGTON (R) — Four Republican leaders in the U.S. House of Representatives have criticised Senate Republican chief Robert Dole for saying the Senate erred in adopting a resolution stating that Jerusalem should remain Israel's capital.

In a Senate speech, Dole said again the resolution was a mistake and chided the Senate for jumping into a sensitive situation "without looking, or even thinking, first."

A public exchange of letters of between Dole and the House Republicans led by party whip Newt Gingrich marked a sharp break with a tradition that says fellow Republicans do not attack one another.

The House is to act on the resolution Tuesday. As adopted by the Senate on March 22 without debate or recorded vote, it states that Congress "acknowledges that Jerusalem is and should remain the capital of the state of Israel."

In a letter to Dole, Gingrich and three other Republican leaders referred to reports that Dole had publicly expressed support for repealing the resolution and added: "We are surprised that you would so quickly distance yourself from an action of the Senate which had 86 co-sponsors,

an action you yourself supported."

The letter also chided Dole for a statement attributed to him on April 13 by the Jerusalem Post justifying a cut in aid to Israel on grounds that the threat to the Jewish state was "probably lessening."

Dole has previously called for cuts in aid to Israel and other leading aid recipients and transfer of the money to emerging democracies and others.

Finally, the letter expressed concern over the "personal nature" of reported remarks in the newspaper.

"You are quoted as saying, 'they (the American Jewish leaders) wouldn't give one penny to anyone else... it's not sensitivity, it's selfishness,'" the letter said.

"Such personal attacks send a negative message that does damage to our party," it said.

"Although we have disagreements about our budget priorities, we should (disagree) without impugning the motives of others."

In his reply Dole denied he had supported repeal of the Jerusalem resolution.

He said the Jerusalem Post had used out-of-context quotes being "peddled" by a television interviewer who had walked out with

the only tape and transcript. He said his remarks referred to the pro-Israel lobby in the United States.

In his speech, Dole said the Jerusalem resolution had "sauntered through (the Senate) in about 15 seconds" but had been brought up repeatedly during talks that he and other members of a Senate delegation had during a recent Middle East trip.

He said that if Arafat leaders were looking for an excuse to avoid the broader issue of the peace process the resolution "gave it to them on a silver platter."

Dole also claimed again that Jerusalem Mayor Teddy Kollek had told the group the resolution had been ill-timed, causing controversy that would help extremists on both sides.

Dole said the administration shared with him part of the responsibility for allowing adoption of the resolution.

When he had checked with administration, he said, he was told: "We don't like it, but we're not going to throw ourselves or any words over this issue."

The longstanding U.S. position on Jerusalem is that its final status has yet to be decided in a peace settlement.

Settlement of more Soviet Jews in West Bank is unwise — Mitterrand

KEY LARGO, Florida (Agencies) — French President Francois Mitterrand has opposed further settlement of Soviet Jews on the Israeli-occupied West Bank, saying it was bound to increase tension.

"It creates a state of insecurity and concern which cannot contribute to reconciliation" between Israelis and Arabs, he told a joint news conference in Florida with President George Bush.

Further settlement would not be wise, he said.

But he said any constraints on the right of Soviet Jews to leave their homeland was unacceptable.

"No condition can be imposed on the fundamental right of Soviet Jews to go where they wish," Mitterrand said after four hours of talks with Bush.

Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev has ended decades-old restrictions on Jews wanting to emigrate but the Arab World fears that the Middle East balance of power could be transformed as a result.

Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) leader Yasser Arafat made the point strongly in Paris this month when he met Mitterrand and former U.S. President Jimmy Carter, who has begun his own Middle East peace initiative.

The PLO claims three million Soviet Jews could settle in Israel over the next 10 years.

Arab nations are bitterly opposed to the newcomers settling in the West Bank, occupied

by Israel since 1967, saying their presence could sabotage peace efforts.

By backing that argument Mitterrand is likely to incur the displeasure of many of France's 700,000 Jews, who form the largest Jewish community in Europe outside the Soviet Union.

French Jews were furious when Mitterrand received Arafat officially for the first time last year.

But the French government considers Arafat a vital partner in any lasting peace settlement following the PLO's decision in Algiers in 1988 to renounce terrorism and recognise Israel's right to exist.

"Since its Algiers conference the PLO has tackled the new prospects (for peace) in a clear-sighted way," Mitterrand said.

Mitterrand defended his country's diplomatic ties to Libya and Iran, saying both countries have denied responsibility for hostage-taking.

Mitterrand said France maintains relations with many regimes "we do not like."

The French president said "it's very difficult to draw the line" in deciding when a country deserves to be ostracised.

Both Iran and Libya "have always said that they were not at the origin of the hostage-taking," said Mitterrand.

The United States has cut relations with the two countries accusing both of "sponsoring international terrorism" including, in Iran's case "influence over the

terrorists holding American hostages in Lebanon."

"As you know, we have a different situation in terms of relations with Iran and Libya," said Bush.

But on a day when the Islamic Jihad said in Beirut it was reneging on its offer to release an American hostage, Bush said, "Let me just take this opportunity to repeat what I said when I first became president: Goodwill begets goodwill. And I link that to the release of American hostages."

"We can't have normal relations when hostages are held," he said, adding that in Libya's case "a verifiable renunciation of terror is terribly important... if we are to have better relations there."

The lawyerly Mitterrand said, "It's always a very difficult question."

He cited France's decision to maintain ties with Chile during "the bloody dictatorship" of Augusto Pinochet, which recently ended. He said the French embassy became "a useful point of transit" for those working in the Chilean resistance.

"I think it's probably a good idea to try to use those relations (with Iran and Libya)... to try to help to get the release of the hostages," said Mitterrand.

The French president drew criticism at home last week when he praised Libya for its role in securing the release of a French woman.

Rafsanjani: Israel biggest threat to Islam

TEHRAN (R) — Hundreds of thousands of Iranians converged on Tehran University Friday shouting "death to Israel, death to America."

President Ali Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani told them that fighting Israel was a Muslim's highest duty.

The rally, combined with Friday prayers, marked "Qods (Jerusalem) Day," the last Friday of the Muslim fasting month of Ramadan, which Iran's late supreme leader, Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini, dedicated to the support of the Palestinian cause.

The crowd included women clad in black chadors and children. The annual turnout is widely seen as a barometer of the

public support Iran's clerical leaders can muster.

Rafsanjani criticised Arab countries which he said understood the danger from Israel but did nothing about it.

"There is no bigger threat to the Islamic World today than Israel. There is no higher duty than the duty to fight against Israel," he said.

"In the Islamic World there are many leaders who understand this reality but do nothing," Rafsanjani said, accusing Egypt of being involved in the immigration of Soviet Jews to Israel.

He reiterated Iran's condemnation of the immigration which has led to Arab protests that the new arrivals might replace Palesti-

nians on the Israeli-occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip.

Rafsanjani, an advocate of improving Iran's relations with the outside world, urged the West to adopt a more balanced policy.

"In order to resolve the Middle East conflict the West has to stop supporting Israel and pay more attention to Muslim public opinion," he said.

He did not mention the promised release of a U.S. captive by pro-Iranian group in Lebanon: which has raised hopes of an end to the hostage issue had a break through in Iran's relations with the United States.

Rafsanjani said last month that he wanted all foreign hostages in Lebanon to be freed.

JORDAN TELEVISION

Tel: 773111-19

PROGRAMME ONE

15:30 Koran
15:40 Programme review
16:05 Children's programme
17:00 Educational programme
18:00 News summary
18:25 Message from Iraq
18:25 A play by Shakespeare
19:10 Local programme
19:40 Programme review
20:00 News in Arabic
20:30 Arabic series
21:30 Programme review
21:40 Consumer's Guide
22:25 Local programme
23:00 News in Arabic

PROGRAMME TWO

16:30 European soccer semifinal match between Marseille and Benfica
18:15 Coustaud
19:00 News in French
19:15 Documentary
19:30 News in Hebrew
20:00 News in Arabic
20:30 Sunday Sports
21:00 Encounter
21:30 News in English
22:30 Feature film: "After the Fall at N.Y."

PRAYER TIMES

05:32 Fajr

04:55 (Sunrise) Dhuha
11:34 Dhuhr
15:12 'Asr
18:13 Maghrib
19:36 Isha

CHURCHES

St. Mary of Nazareth Church Swedish, Tel. 810740
Assemblies of God Church, Tel. 63278

Jordan gears up to celebrate Earth Day

King urges Jordanians to protect environment

By a Jordan Times Staff Writer

AMMAN — His Majesty King Hussein Friday said the protection of the planet Earth was the collective responsibility of the whole human race, and not the sole responsibility of an individual or an individual country.

In an exclusive article to Reem magazine, which is issued by the Royal Society for the Conservation of Nature (RSCN), King Hussein called for addressing the problem of protecting Earth within a global perspective, and stressed the need for drawing up a world programme for the protection of environment and Earth.

The King's article was published on the occasion of Earth Day, which will be marked Sunday. In the article, the King said the "worst aggression on environment is the premeditated ignorance of the population and imbalance in resources with the starving and deprived constituting the rule while the fortunate and well-to-do are the exception."

The King called for reaching a balance between the Earth and our life on it, because "the absence of such balance means our end as a human family and destruction for our world or our great house." "The water we drink, the air we breathe, the trees to which we resort when we want shade and the soil we plant are all a divine trust, which we should take very good care of for ensuring the best future for ourselves and the future generations," the King said.

However, he said, "in our search to secure a quiet, and peaceful life, we ignored the need to maintain the equilibrium and did not think of the harmful effects of our quest for that kind of life."

He went on saying "the degradation of environment has more devastating effects, than wars or diseases, and it continues every thing around us will be polluted."

King Hussein called for directing special attention to the protection of the environment and called on the government and all citizens, institutions and societies to deal with the Earth issue as a priority.

He called on the government to enact legislation on protection of the environment as a national responsibility.

The King also stressed the need for drawing up a national comprehensive programme to protect the environment.

National campaign

Jordan is gearing up for a series of activities to begin in observance of Earth Day, a day designed to lay emphasis on the need for the protection of the environment.

In preparation for the event a special committee, working under the auspices of the Royal Society for the Conservation of Nature (RSCN), has been busy making last minute arrangements for the participation of various public and private organisations and students in the set of programmes for the occasion.

The committee members, led by RSCN President Anis Musasher, presented Her Majesty Queen Noor Al Hussein with a briefing on these preparations at a meeting held Thursday.

"Under directives from His Majesty King Hussein, Jordan will observe a Jordanian environment year beginning April 22 during which various activities will be directed towards the protection of the environment," the Queen announced at the meeting.

The Queen said a special Royal award would be presented to any citizen or institution in Jordan which would offer distinguished services designed to safeguard the environment in the Kingdom.

The Queen emphasised the need for all organisations represented on the RSCN committee to join hands and exchange consultations and expertise in the process of maintaining coordination and cooperation for the sake of protecting environment and natural wealth in the country.

The Queen heard each committee member present an outline of his or her department's preparations for the Earth Day celebrations which would be held in Jordan along with 100 other countries around the world.

The Jordan News Agency, Petra, said the Ministry of Education had enlisted nearly 10,000 students to take part in a comprehensive clean-up campaign along the main highways in the country.

"The campaign will be conducted along the Jweideh-Azraq, Zarqa-Mafraq, Amman-Aqaba highways where students will collect old motor tyres, waste plastic products, and rubbish," Petra said.

It said special songs had been composed and posters had been distributed to students underlining the importance of preserving the environment and fighting pollution by all possible means.

Student involvement

All universities and community

colleges have been issued instructions to involve their students in activities, to show documentaries and hold lectures and seminars emphasising the need for protecting the environment. The students will also have to carry out cleaning campaigns around the educational institutions and to plant trees.

The Ministry of Water and Irrigation said in a statement it would intensify its efforts to protect water resources and prevent industrial pollutants from reaching underground water.

The ministry said it would launch a comprehensive campaign, starting Sunday, to clean areas around the water springs and artesian wells and will distribute posters to spread awareness of protecting water supplies.

The ministry said it would set up small wastewater treatment plants to protect pollution of water in dams and wadis.

The Jordanian Armed Forces announced that army vehicles would be provided to transport students or to carry garbage to places assigned for refuse disposal.

A series of postage stamps will be issued to commemorate Earth Day, and several government departments, in cooperation with the Royal Scientific Society (RSS) will help in the campaign through special programmes, testing samples of materials and water and publishing their findings.

Even the exhausts of vehicles will be under watch during the campaign by the police patrols which will stop cars emitting excessive fumes.

The RSS, which has prepared special posters and leaflets about air pollution within the capital, said its teams will make tours of different areas to collect samples of air for testing and monitor the atmosphere.

The RSCN will distribute special T-shirts with logos for the protection of the environment and will issue a special edition of Reem magazine with articles featuring ways of providing protection to land, sea and air, and underlining the need for planting trees and greening the country.

On the Earth Day committee are members that represent the RSCN, the ministries of interior, water and irrigation, education, higher education, transport, agriculture and the RSS, the post offices and Postal Savings Corporation, the Armed Forces, the Public Security Department, the Radio and Television Corporation, and the Department of Environment at the Ministry of Municipal and Rural Affairs.



RSCN members brief Her Majesty Queen Noor on preparations for Earth Day celebrations (Petra photo)

Arar reports APU support for Iraq

AMMAN (Petra) — Speaker of the Lower House of Parliament Suleiman Arar and the parliamentary delegation accompanying him returned home Friday from Baghdad, where they took part in an extraordinary session of the inter-Arab Parliamentary Union, which concluded Thursday.

In an arrival statement, Arar said that the meeting focused on the hostile campaign against Iraq, which seeks to develop its defence capability and weaponry.

"The recent hostile attacks against Iraq took various forms, among which claims that Iraq had bought nuclear arms from the United States markets, or had imported barrels to be used for cannons," Arar said.

He pointed out that such attacks were not only directed against Iraq, but against the whole Arab Nation.

Arar denounced the anti-Iraq campaign, saying "its genuine objective was to throw dust into the eyes, pave the way for a new Israeli aggression on Iraq and prevent it from building its power."

Arar expressed surprise at the attacks and the justifications given for them. He called on the states which launched the hostile campaign against Iraq to condemn Israel which has now been in possession of nuclear reactors for more than 10 years.

He labelled the campaign irrational and said it was very hard to believe that such parts, needed for academic research at universities, would be used for developing nuclear weapons, as they were sold anywhere in the United States.

"The campaign by the United States, Britain and Israel against

Iraq reflects the Zionist influence on the Western countries, particularly the United States," said Arar.

He concluded saying the inter-Arab stand was unanimous on the need to support Iraq and to denounce the new conspiracy against it.

The Jordanian delegation to the meetings included the deputies Nayef Abu Tayeh, Abdulrah Zureiqat and the senate member Said Al Tal.

At the conclusion of their meetings in Baghdad, the Arab parliamentarians taking part in the session issued a communique, voicing their full support of Iraq and denouncing the European decision recognising Jerusalem as the capital of Israel.

The communique called on all Arabs to support Iraq to help it counter the hostile campaign and appealed to the international community to understand the Iraqi position.

It stressed the need for exercising pressure on Israel to sign the treaty of non-proliferation of nuclear arms and to allow the International Atomic Energy Agency to inspect the Israeli installations.

The communique denounced the U.S. Congress decision on Jerusalem, the Jewish settlement policy, and the frozen campaign against Libya.

At the end of their meetings, the participants sent a cable to Iraqi President Saddam Hussein, in which they voiced appreciation to him for hosting the meetings in Baghdad.

Housing Corporation plans saving system

AMMAN (I.T.) — The Housing Corporation has finalised preparations for the application of a savings system for housing purposes and will put this system into force at the beginning of the coming month, according to an announcement Friday.

The announcement was made by Housing Corporation Director-General Yusef Hiyasat who said the system would first be applied at the Salt Housing Estate, on which work starts in May, and takes two years to complete.

"The Salt estate will comprise 109 units and 32 pieces of land which will be given to beneficiaries wishing to set up their own homes on them," Hiyasat said.

"The savings system will enable beneficiaries to save up money for their housing units built by the corporation, and special forms for those willing to take part in the programme will be distributed in the coming month," Hiyasat said.

In the forms, beneficiaries will provide information about their families, work, total income, present living place and the type of housing unit desired in any corporation project.

Hiyasat said beneficiaries have to be Jordanians, of 21 years of age and above and would benefit from this programme if they did not own their own homes or had not previously benefited from other housing schemes.

"According to regulations, each beneficiary accepting the savings system for housing will have to pay two per cent of the total cost of the housing unit he desires, and pledge to continue to pay monthly instalments until his savings account for 15 per cent of the total cost of the unit," Hiyasat said.

He said beneficiaries have the right to choose the housing project or change their minds about their choice depending on where they choose to live or the place of work.

"In return, the corporation pledges to provide a housing unit for the beneficiary within six years of taking part in the programme," Hiyasat added.

The Housing Corporation last month awarded a local construction firm a two-year contract for the construction of housing units within the Salt area. The 109 units of the project will be of one floor and 79 square metres in area, but beneficiaries could expand horizontally to 136 square metres, according to the contract.

Hiyasat said the corporation would also build 47 housing units of 91 square metres that could be expanded to 130 square metres.

"The corporation will first build four housing units to serve as a model for the beneficiaries to choose from," said Hiyasat. Beneficiaries who get homes from the corporation normally spread cost instalments over 30 years, according to income, and they usually enjoy a life insurance policy under an arrangement between the corporation and an insurance company.

National charter panel to meet

AMMAN (I.T.) — The 60-member Royal Commission entrusted to draw up a national charter to regulate political life in Jordan meets at the Royal Court Saturday under the chairmanship of Ahmad Obeidat.

The commission, named by His Majesty King Hussein April 9, will first deal with procedural matters during which the members will decide on the course of action and the nature of topics to be given priority, according to Obeidat upon announcing the date of the meeting.

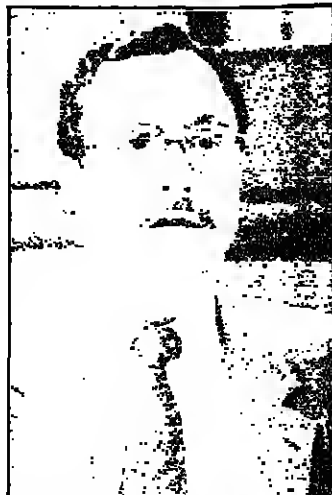
He said that the commission members will also elect a deputy chairman and a general rapporteur for the meetings.

"Commission members will have their first chance to openly exchange views and consult on matters related to their task and they could set up sub-committees to follow up certain matters or to coordinate contacts with commission members," Obeidat said in a statement to the Jordan News Agency, Petra.

The commission members who represent various political orientations in Jordan as well as parliamentarians, scholars, university professors, writers and journalists met with His Majesty King Hussein, April 10, and heard his views about the commission's mission.

The King told the commission democratisation of Jordan was an irreversible process and democratic tolerance and opposing views should be the guiding force for political life in the Kingdom under the guidelines set by the proposed national charter.

The King said at the meeting



Ahmad Obeidat

that the charter would serve as a social contract pivoted on democracy and founded on the constitution. "The charter would be a broad and flexible framework for national action and would not be a substitute to the Jordanian constitution," the King had said.

Interviewed on Jordan Television later, Obeidat expressed the view that the charter would take months to be formulated.

Obeidat, a member of the Upper House of Parliament and former Prime Minister of Jordan said the present stage in Jordan was influenced by external and internal forces and the democratic life required a national dialogue, through the commission members, to define national objectives and essential steps to be taken.

He described the charter as a broad base enabling population participation in the decision making process.

'Jordan needs more schools, appropriate education planning'

AMMAN (Petra) — A United Nations Educational expert has expressed his view that Jordan will need at least 40 new schools each year to cope with the expansion in education at all levels.

In a statement here Friday, director of the regional office of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO), Dr. Mohammad Hazem said the Arab World is in need of 2,000 new schools each year to serve the six-11-year-old children in the primary, preparatory and secondary levels.

"Not only do the Arab states require more schools, but they also have to adopt proper plans in advance to meet the requirements of education which should be made to serve the community needs," Kazem said in his statement Friday.

Kazem praised Jordan's efforts in education and the country's endeavours to eradicate illiteracy.

"UNESCO is at present implementing a special programme which started in 1988 to help Jordan universalise the innovative education for children at the basic level and to eradicate illiteracy by the year 2,000," Kazem added. He said this process required vast funds and efficient teachers and administrators.

"UNESCO is helping Jordan to implement this programme through the recently established centre for educational research in Jordan," Kazem added.

In September 1990, UNESCO plans to organise a general conference for ministers of education in developing nations in Geneva to discuss ways for promoting basic education and the eradication of illiteracy," Kazem said. But, he said, ministers of education from Jordan and other Arab states would convene in Cairo in November to discuss their own methods for the eradication of illiteracy by the end of the present century.

Door open for increased coordination

(Continued from page 1)

agreement on Jordanian-Palestinian confederation pointing out that it was premature to discuss the issue.

Jordan's position, repeatedly underlined by the King and senior officials, is that any moves towards confederation should come only after the occupied Palestinian territories have been liberated. Foreign Minister Qasem reiterated the same position in a Jordan Television programme Wednesday evening.

The Jordanian official also dismissed a suggestion that the PLO imparted in impression of being anxious to arrive at some form of an agreement on confederation while Jordan was not to enthusiastic about the idea. "I will not characterise it that way at all," he said. "We got the impression that there is more political will to increase coordination and cooperation."

The official attributed the decision to revitalise the political committee to several factors, including the impasse in the Middle East peace process and the expected massive influx of Jewish immigrants to Israel and the possibility that the bulk of them could be settled in the occupied territories at the expense of Palestinian.

"The feeling is that there was a need for a consolidation of Jordanian-Palestinian cooperation towards a more solid Arab front" to confront these issues, the official said.

According to the official, convening an emergency Arab summit was one of the issues discussed between the King and Arafat. "The PLO said that it would pursue efforts to convene an urgent Arab summit and Jordan reaffirmed its belief in the necessity of such a meeting," he said. The main topics for discussion at the proposed summit are expected to be Jewish immigration to Israel and Israel's efforts to consolidate its grip on Arab Jerusalem.

Asked whether Arafat's call that Baghdad be the venue for an urgent Arab summit prior to the May 30-June 3 meeting of the superpowers had any significance in terms of Syrian-Iraqi reconciliation, the official said, "A real new atmosphere is being created" for settling the differences between Damascus and Baghdad. The proposed "summit will be the actual form" for concrete action in this regard, he said. "If (Syrian President Hafez Al Assad) goes to Baghdad to attend the summit, then it will mean that the problem is solved," he added without elaboration. At the

same time, the official also described Arafat's suggestion of Baghdad as the summit venue "as more of a sign of solidarity with Iraq" at a time when Baghdad is seen as the target of a Western-American media campaign against its military strength and drive to build its defensive abilities.

The official said Egypt and the PLO had resolved their differences, which erupted after media attacks in the Egyptian press against what was described as "slow response" in condemning an attack on an Israeli bus in Egypt in January. At least two state-guided Egyptian papers had charged that the PLO was not extending enough cooperation to Egypt to apprehend the assailants.

In reply to a question on an 11-point list of demands raised by the Muslim Brotherhood, the largest organised group in the Lower House of Parliament, the Jordanian official said Thursday he would not read much into the issue except that "it is only natural in the democratic process that various groups issue demands and to send memos and raise them in Parliament through constitutional means."

Settlers allowed to stay

(Continued from page 1)

lived in the complex for more than 40 years, \$3.5 million for the user rights. Matossian left for Geneva before the settlers moved in.

But attorney Yohanan Althauer, who represents the church, said that Matossian had no right to sublet the building. He said the church has been trying since 1982 to evict Matossian and that the case was pending. A

decision is not expected for another six months, Althauer said.

The supreme court will not make a ruling on the tenancy dispute, but only on whether the settlers can remain while the lower court sorts out the tenancy rights.

Althauer said that the supreme court judges Friday had offered a compromise under which the settlers would leave and only a few SBC representatives would re-

main until the tenancy dispute is decided.

"Both sides rejected the compromise," Althauer said.

In another twist in the case, the supreme court Friday accepted Matossian's brother, Merihan, and nephew, Sirah, as parties to the case.

Merihan and Sirah asked that the settler be evicted, claiming the family didn't sell the user rights to SBC at all, but to a Lebanese Christian.

NATIONAL NEWS IN BRIEF

Committee lauds Jordanian, Iraqi stands

AMMAN (Petra) — The Islamic-Christian Committee taking part in the Jerusalem general Islamic conference Friday sent a cable to His Majesty King Hussein expressing its pride in the King's positions in defending the religious holy shrines and the Arabs' rights in Jerusalem. The committee appreciates the King's efforts to unite the Arab and Islamic nations in confronting the common dangers threatening them. The committee sent another cable to Iraqi President Saddam Hussein in which it expressed its admiration for and pride in his stand, "which defends the right of the Arab Nation against the Zionist threats." Another cable was sent to Arab League Secretary General Chadi Kilib calling for a unified, strong Arab stand to counter the dangers facing the Arab Nation at this stage.

Minister visits educational institutions

ZARQA (Petra) — Health Minister Mohammad Adnab Al Zaben Thursday visited the Nursing College and the Paramedics Institute at Yajouz within the Zarqa governorate. 100 nurses and 25 midwives will graduate from the Nursing College on an annual basis, the minister was told during the visit. The minister toured the two premises which will be formally opened next month. According to health ministry sources the two projects cost JD 200,000.

House panel chief meets U.S. teachers

AMMAN (Petra) — Chairman of the External Affairs Committee at the Lower House of Parliament Thursday reviewed with a U.S. teachers delegation the dangers of Soviet Jewish immigration to Palestine and its negative impact on the Arab population. He also reviewed the development of the Arab-Israeli conflict, the Israeli violation of human rights and the oppressive and inhuman Israeli practices against Arab citizens. The delegation arrived in Amman Wednesday on a four-day visit to Jordan for talks with several senior educational officials.

Minister meets Tunisian delegation

AMMAN (Petra) — Minister of Culture Khaled Al Karaki Thursday met with a two-man Tunisian delegation comprising the chairman of the international cultural festivals in Tunisia Izzeddin Al Madani and Carthage Festival for Fine Arts Director Hassan Bou Zerbib. The two sides discussed ways to promote cultural relations between Jordan and Tunisia in general and coordination in the field of cultural festivals in both countries in particular. The meeting was attended by Jerash festival Director Akram Masarweh.

WHAT'S GOING ON

The following listings are compiled from monthly bulletins and the daily Arabic press. Readers are advised to verify the listed time and place with the concerned institutions.

LECTURE

★ Lecture on "German Excavations in Thebes (new empire)" by Prof. Dr. Rainer Stadelmann at the Goethe Institute — 8:00 p.m.

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Jordan Times

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Protection against the unseen

JORDAN HAS surpassed many of the developing countries in the world in its concern and efforts to protect the environment. The Kingdom will be celebrating Earth Day that falls April 22 with vigour and determination. Special campaigns to commemorate the occasion have been in planning for weeks and are now being implemented in most areas in the Kingdom. Aqaba in particular has been the scene of a concerted cleaning campaign to collect refuse and garbage from the coastline as well as the city itself. Other campaigns, which will draw hundreds of volunteers, are aimed at collecting old tyres and plastic waste from the Jordan Valley and picnic areas.

Yet, what is more pressing than collecting garbage and refuse from the urban and rural areas in the country is the pollution of our water sources and air. Such "garbage" may not be seen by the naked eye and therefore constitute a lesser eye sore. Still, the dangers posed by such hazards to human life are no less threatening to the existence of Jordan and its people. It would be in order therefore to accord them higher priority than the one meted to them till this point in time. Jordan's celebrations of Earth Day would never be complete without cleaning the unseen, whether in the water Jordanians drink or the air that they breathe. Jordan already prides itself as one of the cleanest countries in the world and its cities are the envy of other metropolises in the region. The joy and pride of all Jordanians would be that much more complete when Jordan's industrial waste is better disposed off in a manner consistent with international norms and standards. And as Aqaba is pioneering the campaign to make Jordan look better, it would earn the appreciation of all Jordanians even more if it directs its attention to the sources of pollution in its environs. The splendours of Aqaba are clearly underlined by the heavy pollution to its air originating from its industries and the sooner a stop is put to this source of grievous harm to Aqaba the happier would be all those who visit it for sunshine and swimming.

JORDAN PRESS EDITORIALS

EVEN if the Israeli settlers who occupied a Greek Orthodox building in Arab Jerusalem were evicted, Israeli leaders would not be deterred from sending other settlers to other parts of the occupied city for a similar performance, said Al Ra'i Arabic daily Friday. The paper said that the settlers seem to be determined to help the Israeli government consolidate its hold over all parts of the Arab lands in Palestine, especially in Jerusalem which encompasses Christian as well as Muslim holy shrines. In the face of all this, the Greek Orthodox Patriarch has now issued a warning to the whole world that he has no alternative but to close the doors of the Holy Sepulchre before the visitors and worshippers and raise black flags over the shrine in a show of protest to the whole world, the paper noted. It said that the warning is directed to the Christian as well as the Islamic worlds which now are witnessing the desecration of holy places that had been in safe hands before the occupation of the holy city took place in 1967. Al Aqsa Mosque and the Holy Sepulchre as well as all other Christian and Muslim shrines in occupied Palestine ought to be safeguarded through joint Christian Islamic efforts, called the paper. Leaders of both faiths worldwide, the paper stressed, should join hands in a serious effort to protect the holy places and prevent any tampering by the Jewish settlers who are now occupying the holy city.

AL Dustour daily dwelt also on the situation in Arab Jerusalem where settlers are still cooped up in premises belonging to the Greek Orthodox Church inside the Christian quarter of the Arab city. Despite the strong protests from the Arab community and the Orthodox Church, despite condemnation of the settlers action and despite the court order to evict the premises the settlers seem to be comfortably settled in with the help of Israeli troops, the paper said. It is regrettable, the paper added, that the Greek Patriarch's voice has not yet found an echo in the Christian world, and has only been hacked by the Arab population in the holy city and their brothers in the Arab World. We call on the Pope in Rome and the Western churches to come to the help of the Greek Orthodox Church in Jerusalem and to openly declare their condemnation of such atrocities committed by the Israeli authorities and the Jewish settlers, said the paper. At the same time, the paper said, we appeal to the Arab countries to beware of the Zionist conspiracies which began in 1968 with the burning of Al Aqsa Mosque in Jerusalem and now are represented in open occupation of the Christian places.

Sawt Al Shaab daily paid tribute to Iraq for its heroic stand during the eight year war with Iran and also in the face of Israel's open threats to the Arabs and its conspiracy with the West Against the Arab Nation. The paper said that the Arab masses had been awaiting the emergence of a real Arab power to confront the Israeli enemy and to deter any aggression on the Arabs ever since the tragedy of 1948. It said that the Arabs had since 1948 lived through a stage of total despair and subjugation to the will of their enemies until Iraq has come out victorious in the war with Iran, and until Baghdad has stood firm in the face of Israel's threats against this nation.

View From Amman

When the Patriarch fell where Christ had risen

By Kamel S. Abu Jaber

IN BEIRUT many believed women wept as Fairuz, the famous Lebanese singer, chanted the Byzantine Good Friday liturgy. In Jerusalem another sad Easter was observed; the festivities, still since 1967, restricted to religious observances alone. This was a particularly sad occasion as the Israelis once again demonstrated, even flaunted, not only their disdain of the most elementary rules of civility, but, with arrogance desecrated one of the holiest days of the Christian Easter celebrations.

Patriarch Theodoros I of the Greek Orthodox Church was leading a peace march against the occupation of his church's property by extremist Jewish activists when he, and his 200 fellow clergymen were assaulted and beaten. The police used clubs and tear gas to disperse the peaceful march, while at the upper windows of the illegally occupied building, bearded Jews in traditional black garb and prayer-shawls swayed in prayer. The violence occurred near the Holy Sepulchre Church, which houses the tomb of the Lord Jesus.

Patriarch Theodoros I need not be insulted. Indeed, though he may never have imagined being clubbed by anyone, should feel honoured falling as he did in the same place where Jesus may have been beaten almost two thousand years ago.

This barbaric act coincided with the visit of a delegation of American senators led by Senator Robert Dole to the area on yet another "fact-finding" mission. The senator voiced his concern: and, with utter disregard for Arab intelligence, he promised to work towards the repeal of the senate resolution passed earlier declaring Jerusalem the capital of Israel. The Senator knows that he cannot do what he promised, for right by his side and while in Amman and totally insensitive to the feelings of his hosts, one of Senator Dole's companions insisted that Jerusalem was indeed the capital of Israel.

Neither senator Dole, nor

his companions needed to come to the Middle East to know the facts. They already knew them: the actual historical facts and those that Israel, since its establishment, has also created. The fact of the matter is that we Arabs have nothing to threaten with, and this in a world that understands nothing but brute force.

The Israelis are not about to conclude peace, unless it is their own version of peace: a peace that will further deplete and degrade not only our rights, lands and dignity, but our very soul as well. Zionism has already succeeded in putting the entire Western world in its service. Bishop Elia Khouri of the Anglican Church was correct when he referred to the West as the "So-called Christians" especially since the epithet Jewdo has come to precede Christian.

The facts are that Israel still nurtures dreams of further expansion; that, fundamentally, there is little or no difference between Shamir and Peres. And that while it was Shamir

who earlier this year declared a need for a greater Israel, it was Peres' Labour party which in the decade between 1967 and 1977 vacillated against reaching a peaceful settlement, annexed Jerusalem, annexed the Syrian Golan Heights and commenced the process of settlements, indeed, colonies in the occupied territories. When did Labour become "dovish" is a question that no one has been able to answer yet; and how is this dovishness displayed yet another puzzle that only we Arabs, in our usual wishful thinking and day dreaming, have literally accepted.

The Middle East is a strange land haunted by myths and memories from time immemorial. Myth and reality interchange all the time affecting life and here we are once again engaged in another death struggle, another round with our "cousins". From 1967 to the present, we have illogically hoped against hope, or is it but another of our pipe dreams,

that peace can be reached through negotiations. No one stopped to think, "negotiate what"? The Israelis want it all. Not only the land but the Soul of the area as well. They have come to capture the soul and the resources of the entire western world and put it in their service and they are not about to withdraw from lands they consider theirs because of legalities, niceties, pity or humanity.

For them they believe it is their right to dig around the Aqsa Mosque and to pray in the Ibrahim Mosque of Khalil. So what if they degrade the Arabs? So what if they beat the Sheikh or the Patriarch? They have already dehumanised us and in the book of Shamir the smiting of an enemy, even the Patriarch is not only justified, but also honorable. The descendants of Joshua, fired with the fundamentalist racist ideology of the "chosen people" will not retreat unless the power vacuum existing presently is the Arab World is

filled. Asking for mercy will not help. Nor will resorting to our "wailing wall" at the United Nations produce anything. Resolution will follow resolution like night follows day but Shamir will not retreat. In his mind, he is superior and has a god-given right to smite mercilessly at whomever he considers his enemy. And Fairuz in her song lamenting the Fall of Jerusalem and Beirut may yet weep over other Arab capitals, falling before the might of the Zionist hordes.

Over the cross on the door to the building they occupied, the settlers super imposed their star of David just like they super imposed it on the nations of the West. Patriarch Theodoros was only trying to prevent the same thing from happening to his church's property.

In English it is called Good Friday while in Arabic it is called Sad Friday. Indeed it was!

Press freedom: Algeria leads the way

By Lial Gruz

While Arab ministers in Tunis were debating the League's return to Cairo across town a small symposium, self-consciously labelled "Freedom of opinion and of expression in the face of power and of the ideological consensus," was inconspicuously breaking taboos. The pompous euphemism of the title was faint camouflage for a two-day debate on freedom of information in the Arab World.

Algeria, until recently one of the more repressive of the Arab systems, is letting its newspaper and publishing industry operate on near-European standards and, even more amazingly, applies the same broad criteria to the state-owned radio and television. Tunisians and Moroccans who live near the border now avidly tune in to Algerian television broadcasts at news time.

The occasion was the celebration of the first anniversary (in fact 17 months) of the Arabic edition of *Le Monde Diplomatique*, which has Tunisian connections; besides there are few other places in the Arab World where such a symposium could even have been envisaged. A monthly offshoot of the August French daily *Le Monde*, the Arabic edition (three-quarters translation; the rest original material) has, bit by bit, managed to get permission for distribution in every Arab country except Iraq, although seizure, black brushwork and scissors are constant hazards. It is printed in Tunis, and there is an arrangement that allows 30,000 copies to be despatched by air without waiting for the local censors' blessing.

No Arab country is entirely free of censorship, but one is coming close. Algeria, until recently one of the more repressive of the Arab systems, is letting its news paper and publishing industry operate on near-European standards and even more amazingly, applies the same broad criteria to the state-owned radio and television. Tunisians and Moroccans who live near the border now avidly tune in to Algerian television broadcasts at news time.

Symbolically, the despised post of minister of information has been abolished; what is left of his attributions is lumped with culture. Algerian journalists, many of whom studied in France, are asking embarrassing questions (and often getting answers) and stirring up hornets' nests with glee. Licenses for new publications are being freely given—much more so than in Tunisia, which used to pride itself on being far more democratic than its

neighbour. In Algeria, the Muslim Brothers and their acolytes are allowed to publish papers, despite worries that they could sweep the June local elections. Algerian liberals, who applaud press freedom, hope that allowing the Islamists to have their say will defuse some of their aura. Tunisia is watching.

Doubt and questioning are rarely encouraged in societies where Islam is predominant, including the Arab World. Some of the intellectuals talking about press freedom in Tunis had problems defining where limits should be set. That differing opinions can subsist side by side is difficult to admit, and an early result of liberalisation is often "multiple monoculture". For example, 14 papers are published in Morocco, each the emanation of a political party; none would even hint that views other than its own exist. Theoretically, by reading them all, Moroccans could get a rounded picture, but price and time preclude such a course.

In countries where television has far outstripped print (and literacy) as a means of communication, the multiplication of satellites makes control increasingly difficult to maintain. Arabsat, which was (among other things) supposed to be a step in that direction, flopped dismally. Dish antennae are status symbols in most of the rich Arab countries; in less-rich Algeria, one of the first visible signs of liberalisation was their appearance on the roofs of apartment houses, where neighbours some times clubbed together to buy their way to multiple channel reception. Tunisia has taken another tack; it broadcasts French *Antenne 2* as its own second channel — except for news broadcasts where Radio-Télévision-Tunisienne (RTT) splices in its own.

Further east, the glimmers of light are more fitful. Egypt has recovered a semi-free press; Jordan is groping towards one as a measure of Parliamentary freedom arrives. Kuwait, where the press was the liveliest in the Arab World after the demise of Beirut, has not recovered all the freedom it had before strict prior censorship was imposed in 1986, at the height of the Gulf war. It may never do so.

AS the regional subgroups (GCC, ACC, UMA) grow stronger, smaller countries may lose some of the freedom they had to decide on their own censorship and information policies. The GCC ministers of information have decided that what is taboo in one of the member countries could and probably will be banned in the others. Thus the strict Saudi standards can be imposed on relatively liberal Kuwait or Bahrain. Egyptians think they could resist similar pressures were they to come from Iraq, its partner in the Arab Cooperation Council.

Iraq is still the most consistently restrictive of all the Arab countries in access to information. — Middle East International London.

Time for the U.S. to act

ISRAEL is once again in crisis — and the search for peace at a standstill — because its leaders have failed to deal with one fundamental issue: the question of whether and how to come to terms with the Palestinians.

It is an issue which the outgoing prime minister, Yitzhak Shamir, has done everything possible to avoid. When the Palestinian leadership seized the initiative in November 1988, in effect challenging Israel to engage in direct negotiations on the basis of coexistence in Palestine, and when the United States pressed Israel to make a positive response, Mr. Shamir put forward a year ago the reluctant suggestion that the Palestinians in the occupied territories should be allowed to hold elections. It was not clear what the elections would be for, nor who would be allowed to take part in them, nor how they would advance the elusive "peace process" which the Americans claimed they were conducting. But, for want of anything better, the Americans seized on the suggestion, which was mysteriously upgraded to become the "Shamir Plan" — and ever since, like the Australian bushman who acquired a new boomerang and spent the rest of his life trying to throw the old one away, Mr. Shamir has been trying desperately to get rid of it.

Since the collapse of his government four weeks ago, it looks as though he has succeeded. We are not likely to hear much more of the Shamir "plan". And with it has gone, for the moment at least, Mr. Shamir's ability to delay the moment of truth any further. So far, so good. Now Mr. Peres is trying to persuade his countrymen that he has a better formula, which half of them doubt, and the personality and drive to put it into effect, which very few Israelis believe. When he was prime minister between 1984 and 1986, Mr. Peres came no nearer to grappling with the Palestinian issue. His preferred solution was the "Jordanian option"; and the Jordanian option in 1990 is even more of a dead duck than the Shamir plan.

The fact is that no Israeli government in 40 years has ever faced up to the necessity to negotiate with the Palestinians on the basis of their common future. The Israeli historian Simha Flapan makes the point in *The Birth of Israel: myths and realities* when writing about the period immediately after Israel had achieved statehood: "One of Israel's most serious failings was its stubborn refusal to consider the Palestinians themselves as partners to the negotiations, a position that has been steadfastly maintained to this day and that remains... the crux of the problem."

In this respect there was no essential difference between Ben-Gurion and Sharett, Golda Meir and Moshe Dayan, Begin and Shamir: all sought to avoid at all costs a direct encounter with the Palestinians at the negotiating table, whatever the framework of the negotiations that were envisaged. This explains the



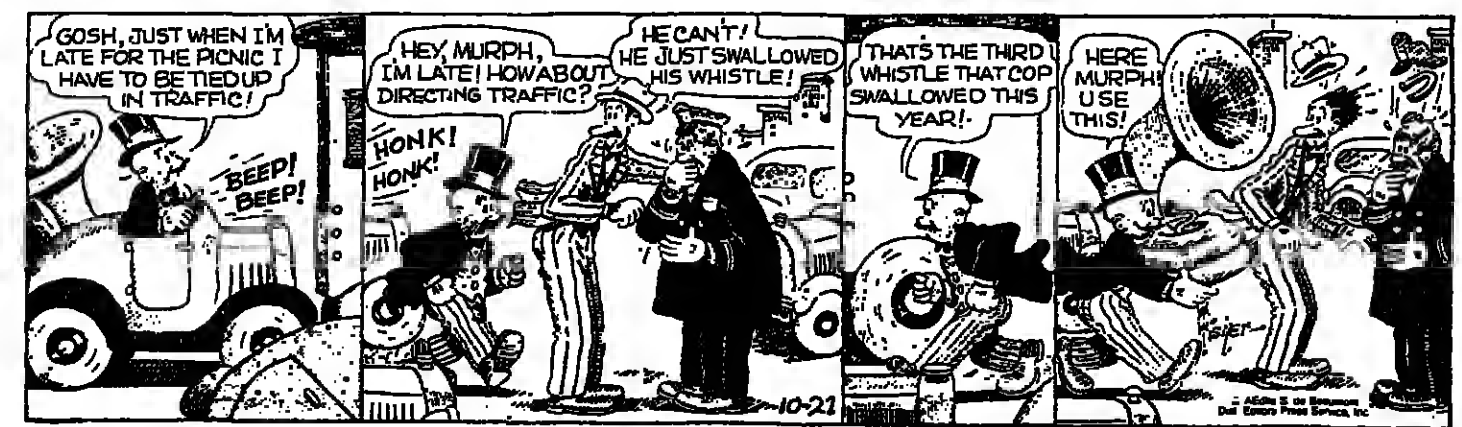
obsessive Israeli attempt to label all Palestinians as "terrorists", in order to disqualify them as the natural and logical interlocutors in any negotiation to put an end to the Palestinian problem.

The reasoning behind this tactic is clear enough — and logical too. Once the Palestinians are recognised as the proper partners in negotiation, it becomes impossible to ignore or deny their rights in Palestine, rights inherent in the status as the indigenous population and confirmed in the decisions of the United Nations ever since the original partition resolution of 1947. But Israel's whole political strategy, especially since the Likud Party first came to power in 1977, has been founded on the premise that the Palestinians have no political rights at all in Palestine and can expect nothing better than some imprecise form of autonomy under Israeli rule.

Until quite recently, this strategy seemed to be succeeding; but its success depended on the unwillingness of the Palestinians to recognise Israel and agree to live in peace alongside it. The PLO's decision, more than a year ago, to do just that left Mr. Shamir out on a limb, exposing his refusal to come to terms with the Palestinians more clearly than ever as an evasion of the facts. And so it was; but can Mr. Peres afford to abandon it and face up to the reality of Israel's situation? Left to himself, almost certainly not. But an unambiguous signal from Washington about the need for change, making it plain that American aid to Israel is no longer to be unconditional, could tip the scale. American Jewish leaders, if they have Israel's real interests at heart, could leave Washington free to send that signal.

The article is an editorial that appeared in the March 30 issue of the London-based Middle East International.

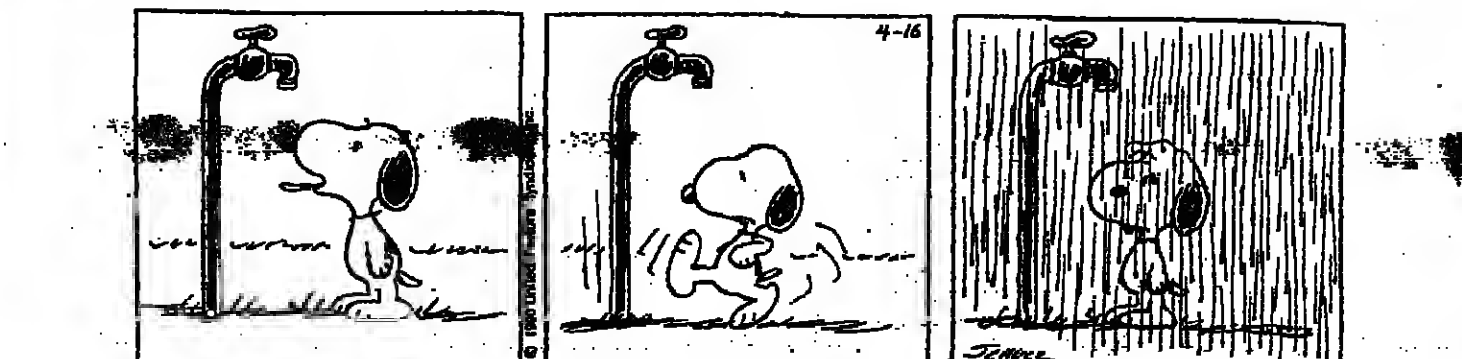
Mutt'n'Jeff



Andy Capp



Peanuts



This was the house that Kamle built

By Barbara Nimri Aziz

AHMAD had slept in his home only two nights before the soldiers arrived. His living room was full of well-wishers during those two days. On the third day, when still more visitors had gathered, the troops moved in and surrounded the entire village. "There must have been 500 soldiers," says Mohammad, Ahmad's son. More than 100 of them surrounded his father's house, cutting it off from the rest of the village. Soldiers pulled visitors out and the officer in charge called Ahmad to him.

Ahmad had just come home from Ketzioh prison where he had been held by the Israelis for ten months. However unjust his detention, he had endured it and was happy to be home. The officer said: "I too have come to welcome you, to give you a gift." He was going to demolish Ahmad and Kamle's dwelling.

By the time Mohammad heard what was to happen and rushed to his father's house, his parents had begun pulling out their furniture. He was barred from getting near. He saw a neighbour help Kamle, his mother, carry out the kitchen cupboard, dishes spilling out. They simply tossed bedding and clothing out of the windows.

After an hour, before they could clear the house of even half its furnishings, the demolition crew moved in. Mohammad led Ahmad into a neighbour's. "Father stood in the middle of the room, not speaking. He didn't want anyone to touch him." His mother had refused to leave, so soldiers pushed her out and ordered someone to hold her. "I want to watch," she shouted. "I want to watch how you can destroy forty years of work in five seconds."

It was exactly 40 years ago that Kamle, a 19-year-old wife and mother, had fled from their original home in Beit Nabala, which was where Ben Gurion airport is today. Muhammad was a year old, his eldest brother, three. After two years, through the U.N. refugee programme, Ahmad and Kamle moved to a West Bank refugee camp where 7,000 other Palestinians, forced to flee their lands in 1948, survive. Each family built their own house, starting with one room and adding more as their children grew. Ten of Kamle's children and two of her grandsons were born in that house. It is the house where children, cousins and neighbours visited almost every evening.

The day the soldiers came

Kamle described the day her home was violated. She sits with her bony hands resting on her thighs. "Ahmad was released from prison on Saturday. The soldiers broke in on the Monday, the 21st of November. Eleven o'clock." Everyone remembered that morning when armoured cars roared through the unpaved streets and the entire camp was put under curfew.

Silently, people moved back onto their verandas, up to their rooftops, holding on to their children. All had seen a house blown up before; but no one ever got used to it. "The flat cement roof of Kamle's house, the whole top floor with it, lifted a meter in the air," said a neighbour. After the explosion, Kamle danced and wept in front of the tangled, contorted heap of concrete. Friends pulled her away and took her to her sons where her husband was waiting; she seemed senseless. So powerful was the explosion that the six surrounding houses were partly destroyed as well. Over a year later the slabs of concrete of Ahmad's second story lie where they fell. The property is confiscated by the military and nothing can ever be built there, they say.

If explanations for the demolition are of any use, the soldiers informed Kamle and Ahmad that their youngest son, Kamal, threw a firebomb the day before and that's why they had come. If we are to believe the claim, it means that on Sunday, this lad, only one night after his father came home after ten months in prison, well-wishers still filling his house, was in the streets attacking Israeli soldiers. A very unlikely event. Kamal was sentenced to a year's imprisonment.

The emotional impact

A Palestinian lawyer, referring to the possibility of appealing against a demolition order, said that the house would already have been destroyed by the time the case was brought. Furthermore, not one appeal had been successful. A legal case worker with the American Friends Service Committee in Jerusalem summed up the situation: "We have abandoned our efforts at legal recourse. We only await a political solution. Meanwhile," she explains, "these physical violations, almost daily occurrences, have a deep emotional impact on people, especially on the very young." She recalled a Palestinian woman, now dead who became an active resistance fighter. "Her earliest memory, when she was barely three years old, was seeing her house blown up. That was in Nablus in 1956."

This case points up two issues: one is the deep trauma evoked by such an experience. The other is the long and systematic use of this unique and brutal strategy. Probably no one knows just how many Palestinian homes have been destroyed for "security" reasons. But in the first 22 months of the *Intifada*, 977 homes were blown up or bulldozed. This figure represents about 10,000 women, men and children made homeless. All since December 1987.

This "punishment" has been employed against Palestinians since the creation of the state of Israel. There seems to be truth in the conclusions of Palestinian human rights advocates that these demolitions are not only to punish an entire family. They effectively complement the larger Israeli "settlement" policy, a

policy aimed at clearing the land of Arabs. It is a tactic to physically "remove".

A consultant with Al Haq, (Law in the Service of Man), based in Ramallah, explains that the military does what it pleases with a building. Sometimes the soldiers seal a house, or part of it; sometimes a bulldozer is brought in to topple it; or explosive experts simply blow it up. The decision whether to dynamite or to seal, says another expert, lies in ownership and is unrelated to the alleged offence of a resident. Where an occupant is also the owner, the house and property are confiscated and the dwelling is dynamited. Where the occupant is found to be renting the house, the rooms are sealed with cement and boarding. Sometimes one room remains unsealed; usually the family is told to get out altogether and the whole place is locked up.

No ownership rights

Owners have absolutely no rights. They cannot even put up a tent where their garden was. Their fruit trees, if they survive, are no longer theirs. Just before a dynamiting, a houseowner is handed a paper written in Hebrew, and told to sign it. Few do. A homeless family cannot rebuild on that land. It is the property of the military, they are told. They must go elsewhere.

But few families leave their country. They find a house to rent nearby, if they can; the family shifts there, doubling up if necessary, to stay together. Now paying rent of up to 200 shekels more a month, they endure. Even as incomes fall because of the economic strain brought on by the *Intifada*, they continue to pay. People have to stay. Few options are open to them. Moreover, the loss of their homes does not quell their opposition to Israeli policies. Following such experiences, a Palestinian often becomes more determined to resist occupation.

This spirit is demonstrated in the militant pride of a West Bank mother whose house was sealed last year. Allegedly, she had been punished because of some violation by her fourth son who, like Kamle's son, was also in prison. "I do not weep when I go to see my child in prison," Fatima assures us. "I sing to him in celebration; he is my hero." "He's the same son they accused of attacking soldiers with stones last year. After he finished his four months in jail, he came home. It was a Tuesday. He slept with us one night. The next night, Wednesday, they came here to catch him again. They came in the night at four o'clock; we were sleeping and they told us they were sealing our house. At four in the morning! They did it."

"Two of my children are in prison now. My husband was too. That son you see outside is Usama; he was released last month. I will go some day too. But I will not be moved from my country." Fatima invited me inside to see the one room the family now lives in — kitchen stove and cupboard in one corner, bedding on the far side. Three doorways stand as frames, one in each wall of the room, each sealed up with cement. The nearest one, she remarks, had been her bedroom. All her sons and daughters were born in that room. To appeal against the action, Fatima paid an Israeli lawyer \$200, but it failed.

The Arab family is the target

Israeli and Palestinian lawyers working for Palestinians whose homes have been destroyed have put forward all the reasonable arguments that logic and law permit. They are all ineffectual. "The military make a law to supersede an earlier one. It's no use," said a Palestinian lawyer in Jerusalem whose energy and faith in law has been completely sapped by government tactics. Palestinians, and people working for justice on their behalf, now accept that they are dealing with a system which cannot respond to a normal, civilised concept of justice. The demolitions, it becomes increasingly evident, are not simply punishments, personal or communal. They are designed to "clear the land", to smash a way of life. They seek to undermine it, to insult it, to dismiss it. The very concept of the Arab family is their target.

Because the Palestinian house is not a mere assemblage of rooms on a street. It is hospital and kitchen, restaurant and garden, mosque and club, nursery and wedding hall. Every Palestinian child can point out to you the room where she or he was born. They know the potted flowers on the stairway; they helped their father plant trees in the yard; they eat fruit from the tomato plants, the figs and the almonds. Somewhere, however small, is a patch of soil where a sapling or shrub is nourished. On the roof lies a tray of mint leaves; boiled wheat is spread, drying; mother gathers up parched red sumac and carries it downstairs. That roof is part of their kitchen and their garden.

So when Israelis demolish a house, they are not merely depriving a people of their shelter: they are symbolically attempting to snuff out a culture. The routine of the day and the months and the lifetimes in those rooms is as much a culture as a fine porcelain vase turned on a wheel a thousand years ago and passed through 40 generations. It is as treasured as a priceless jewel. The military does not seem to understand that this family is ideological and social, not material; it cannot be destroyed. Like an oral tradition, it endures. — Middle East International.

Barbara Nimri Aziz is an anthropologist and writer. She recently returned from the occupied Palestinian lands.

Crumbling books may win new life

CHICAGO (R) — New chemical processes may help save millions of old books for posterity by neutralising the acid time bombs in the paper on which they are printed.

Small scale processes have been successful, but libraries and book preservers are anxiously awaiting a large-scale project to demonstrate the feasibility — and affordability — of mass de-acidification of books.

De-acidification is the latest tactic in the struggle to preserve books and other materials which are the victims of acid deterioration, a process which eventually turns the pages so brittle that they crumble at the touch.

"People started to realise there was a problem some 50 years ago... a book will deteriorate in as little as 50 years. Seldom will they last much more than a hundred," said Richard Miller, de-

acidification project director for Alko Chemicals.

Before 1850 books were printed on durable paper made from rag-derived linen, Miller said. But later wood pulp was used as an economical alternative.

The aluminium sulphate used to break down the cellulose in the wood pulp eventually breaks down into a caustic acid in the paper and as a result most books printed after 1850 carry the seeds of their own destruction.

Miller estimates that one billion rotting books in research libraries around the world can be preserved for future use by chemical treatment.

Research has yielded several chemical processes for stabilising the acid in books which could extend their shelf life for hundreds of years. But the challenge has been to adapt the technology

of treating a book page by page at a cost of up to \$1,000 a book to treating hundreds of volumes at a time for less than \$10 each.

In a research project coordinated by the U.S. Library of Congress, Alko developed a mass de-acidification process using diethyl zinc (DEZ) gas, Miller said.

Books are loaded into a chamber and treated with the gas under high pressure so that it permeates the pages even with the books closed and stacked on shelves.

The problem Alko has had to overcome is that DEZ is very volatile and can ignite when it comes into contact with oxygen.

Jim Hieserman, vice president of marketing for Chicago-based Lithium Corp, said his company is introducing a process which de-acidifies and strengthens the paper.

This should allow the recovery of some volumes that are too brittle to be handled, he said.

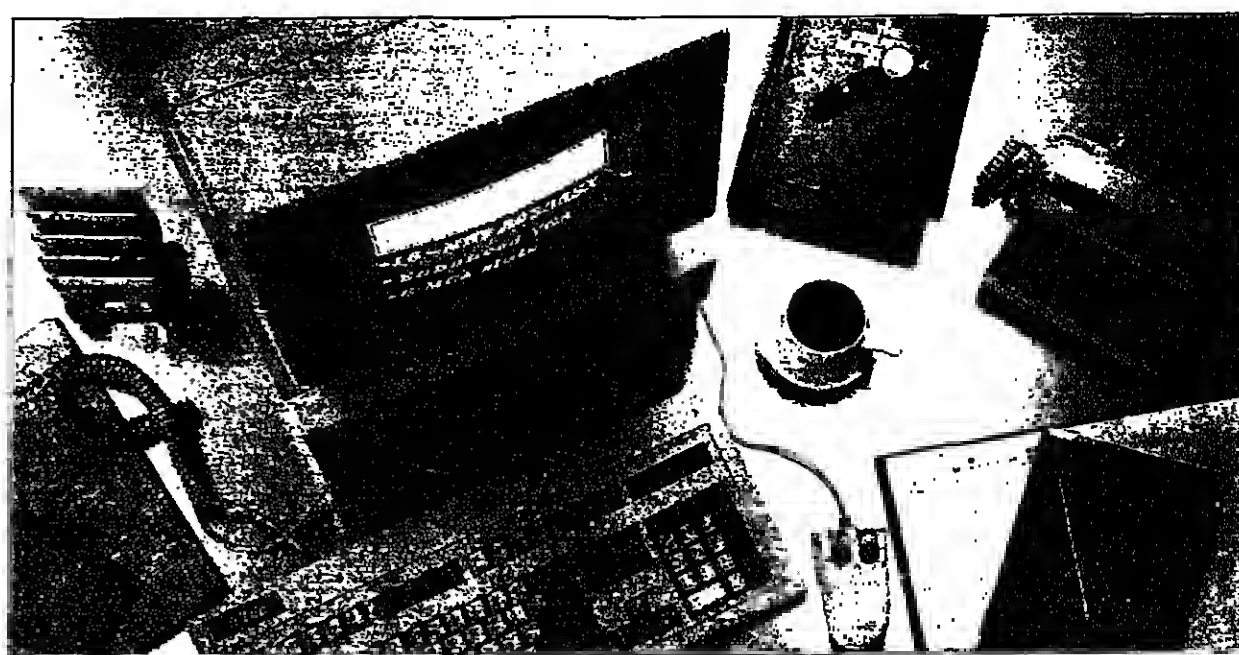
Another process, named Wei T'o after the ancient Chinese god who protects books, uses an organic magnesium carbonate suspended in a gaseous solution of two types of freon and methanol.

In a process marketed by Wei T'o associates of Matteson, Illinois, books are dried in a vacuum chamber, saturated with the liquid gas for an hour and then dried overnight.

The National Library of Canada has used the Wei T'o process since 1981, but observers say the project does not treat enough volumes at a time to justify a large programme.

The Library of Congress will seek bids next year for a long-term de-acidification project that will treat up to a million volumes a year for 20 years.

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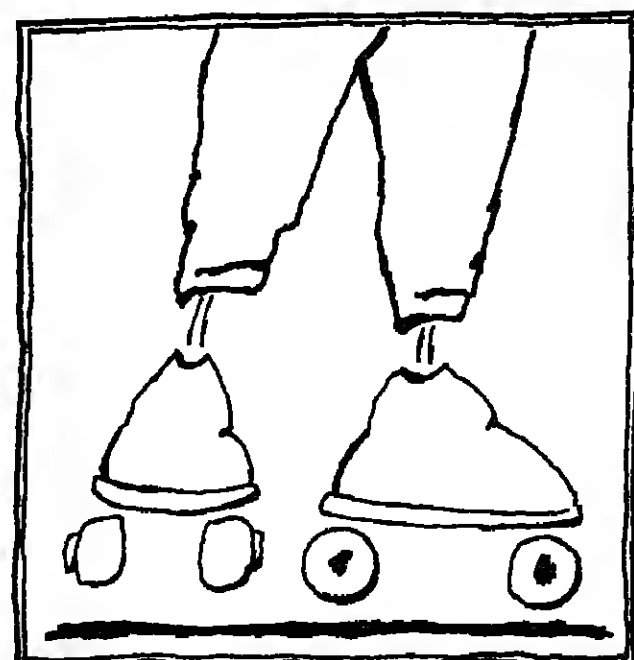
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Jordan Times

Peres seeks rabbis' support

(Continued from page 1)
that he would vote with Likud. "I cannot support a government under the banner of (trading) territory for peace. I do not believe in that way, which is likely to endanger state security most gravely," he said. The Labour-Likud coalition collapsed and Shamir was defeated in parliament five weeks ago. However, Shamir shored up his camp Thursday by persuading the

Likud Party's central committee to ratify a coalition agreement that grants four breakaway deputies, led by Economics Minister Yitzhak Mordechai, government jobs and safe parliament seats.

The fight for the rabbi's allegiance has brought violence. An unknown assailant threw a tear-gas grenade into an Agudat Israel meeting in the Tel Aviv suburb of Bnei Brak Thursday night, injuring nine people.



Iran searches for oil buyers

DUBAI (R) — The world oil glut is putting the squeeze on Iran, dependent on oil exports for 90 per cent of the hard currency it needs to inject new life into its economy.

So Tehran is searching harder and harder to find buyers for its poor quality crude.

"Iran is in an embarrassing situation," one senior oil industry analyst said. "It produces within its OPEC (Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries) quota, but unlike other source crude producers like Kuwait, it does not have any outlet to get rid of its oil."

Over 20 million barrels of Iranian oil have accumulated in world refining centres, pushing the price of Iran's crude below \$12 a barrel, or \$4 to \$5 below its January level, oil analysts said. That has cost \$15 million a day in lost revenue in the past month, analysts estimate.

Most of Iran's oil exports are of sour crude, which contains high levels of the pollutant sulphur but yields less gasoline when refined. It is not favoured by most refiners.

World oil markets staged a partial recovery Thursday after OPEC announced an emergency meeting May 2 to discuss the market slump.

But market analysts believe the huge oil inventories in consumer countries will keep prices depressed during the second quarter of the year, whatever OPEC decides.

Iran is in a double bind. It cannot increase its manufacturing base rapidly without diverting more of its energy production to drive domestic industry.

But it cannot boost its energy production base without exporting most of the available oil to earn foreign exchange to pay for

the huge development costs.

Oil industry sources in the Gulf said so far in April Iran's oil exports remained below two million barrels per day (BPD), with 750,000 going to domestic refineries, bringing its total actual output to around 2.75 million, compared with a 3.14 million OPEC quota.

Although other members of OPEC exceeded their quotas, leading to the current market glut, Iran was left with unsold cargoes as buyers shied away from its oil in favour of better quality crudes when oil prices started to decline.

OPEC output is estimated at around 24 million BPD in April, some two to three million over projected demand for its oil in the second quarter. The excess output comes mainly from Kuwait, the United Arab Emirates (UAE) and Saudi Arabia.

Iran stays silent

Iranian leaders have kept silent since the price decline, refraining from criticising the three Arab states across the Gulf.

"Iran probably does not want to escalate tension with Saudi Arabia as it may work out a compromise with Riyadh on quotas at the next OPEC meeting," an oil analyst said.

But the Iranian newspaper Abrar accused Saudi Arabia Wednesday of being the "main culprit" of the price decline, saying it led Kuwait and the UAE to produce above their OPEC quotas.

Diplomatic relations between Iran and Saudi Arabia have been cut since April 1988, but the two countries meet in OPEC conferences to work out solutions when talks are deadlocked.

They represent opposing fac-

tions in OPEC. Saudi Arabia, along with other big Gulf Arab producers with large oil reserves, wants oil prices low to encourage world demand.

Iran wants limited output

Iran, along with small OPEC producers, want to limit OPEC output to earn more in the short term.

Iran's total output capacity is seen somewhere around 3.2 to 3.5 million BPD, following the resumption of gas injection in some fields to enhance production.

Iran also plans to spend billions of dollars to boost its oil and petrochemical facilities, devastated during the Gulf war with Iraq which halted with a cease-fire 10 months ago.

Iranian oil production in March rose to its quota level of 3.15 million BPD after it fell as low as 2.8 million BPD in February, oil industry sources say.

In February, Iran kept a lot of oil on tankers off Kharg Island, and sent them off the Europe in March, one source said.

But low Iranian prices have attracted some unlikely customers to Iran's main oil loading terminal at Kharg in the northern Gulf, oil and shipping sources in the Gulf said.

They said British Petroleum and Shell from Britain and even the Singapore subsidiary of Caltex from the United States, have loaded oil from Kharg — even though Britain and the United States have tense political relations with Iran.

U.S. companies still do not deal with Iran directly and Washington pressured its allies in Europe during the Gulf war not to buy Iranian oil.



Karl Otto Pöchl Bundesbank takes the offensive in union debate

FRANKFURT (Agencies) — The Bundesbank, West Germany's independent central bank, is taking the offensive to win backing for its controversial proposal to swap East German marks for West German marks at a general rate of two to one.

As temperatures rise in the debate over the terms of German monetary union, normally retiring Bundesbank officials are going on national and regional television programmes and board members have given a series of newspaper articles and interviews.

"The Bundesbank is arguing that it has been misunderstood," said CitiBank Vice President Martin Wiedmann.

The central bank says a two-for-one swap rate is essential to allow East German firms to repay their massive debts and to prevent a sharp rise in monetary growth triggering a sharp rise in inflationary pressures.

The only exception to the two-for-one swap rate would be the first 2,000 marks (\$1,200) of personal savings which should be swapped at par, it says.

At present, the East German mark cannot be freely exchanged for other currencies. On the black market it is worth about 20 West German pfennings (\$0.12) while at the official tourist rate it is worth 33 pfennings (\$0.20).

The Bundesbank's proposal has split the West German government in Bonn and officials in the East, including new Prime Minister Lothar de Maiziere, have turned it down.

In a speech to East Germany's new freely elected parliament Thursday, de Maiziere rejected pressure for a two-to-one swap rate, saying East German dignity and property were at stake.

"We (two Germanys) must reach an accord that will ensure East German citizens do not get the feeling they will become second-class citizens," the Christian Democratic leader said.

In the latest television appearance by central bank officials, Bundesbank President Karl Otto Pöchl said Thursday the Bundesbank plan had been misinterpreted.

The proposals would not lead to a halving of East Germany's already low wages because wages would be raised before monetary union was set, Pöchl said.

And in a magazine interview earlier in the week, central bank deputy President Helmut Schlesinger warned that the Bundesbank could be forced to tighten monetary policy if the wrong monetary union exchange rate was set. It was Schlesinger's second interview on this topic in less than a week.

Bundesbank board member, Guenter Storch has also appeared on regional television, emphasising that an East German mark "did not have the same value as a West German mark."

Economists said the Bundesbank was trying to limit the political damage caused when its proposals were leaked to the press last month. But they noted signs that the Bundesbank may be ready to compromise on some elements of its proposal.

Grim figures

Nearly 160,000 industrial and construction workers either left or lost their jobs in the past year as East Germany began to shake off 40 years of Communism, government economic officials said Wednesday.

As the new government released the first official unemployment statistics, the labour minister called for employment guarantees to be part of any plan for unification with West Germany.

The government, in the most detailed figures released in East Germany, described a grim economic landscape of declining production.

East German industrial output fell by five per cent during the first quarter of this year compared to the same period in 1989, said the government's chief statistician, Arno Donda.

Brazil plan has wealthy running to psychiatrists

RIO DE JANEIRO, Brazil (AP) — President Fernando Collor de Mello's drastic economic plan has Brazilian psychiatrists working overtime to give the nation's wealthy a shoulder to cry on.

"I've been working 14 hours a day since the plan was announced. The rich feel a mixture of panic, astonishment, anger, and depression, and they want to talk about it," said Flavio Gikovate, director of the Institute of Psychotherapy.

Collor decreed his plan March 16, one day after taking office. It set an 18-month freeze on savings accounts of more than \$1,200. It also limits withdrawals from money market funds to \$500, or 20 per cent of an account, whichever is greater.

The measure froze about \$115 billion — 80 per cent of all bank deposits.

Most of Brazil's poor majority were not directly hit, as few had savings that were affected. And with record inflation drastically reduced during the past month, many of the worse-off say their salaries are buying more.

But the wealthy are hurting, financially and psychologically. According to the prominent newsweekly *Veja*, at least two deaths have resulted directly from Collor's "new Brazil plan."

A Sao Paulo lawyer identified only as Walter Z. had his entire life's savings frozen in a bank and was unable to pay debts. He shot himself to death three weeks after the plan was decreed.

And 39-year-old Altair Rodrigues, a married father of two who had almost all proceeds frozen from the sale of his Sao Paulo home and bar, died of a heart attack.

While most wealthy Brazilians have adapted to their new circumstances with less trauma, many are still reeling from the blow.

"For the poor, money is simply a means of buying things. For the rich, money means status. Many of my patients are depressed because

they can no longer afford the lifestyle they were accustomed to and feel their social standing has fallen," Gikovate said.

"Brazil's rich are very spoiled. The poor have always paid for the country's difficulties and the wealthy are not used to sacrificing," he added.

Another Sao Paulo psychiatrist, Marcelo Burkhard Sobrinho, said his work load has increased 40 per cent since the plan was announced.

"I thought I'd lose clients as they'd be short on money, but it's just the opposite. Those who can't pay now are begging me to keep them on, with promises that they'll pay as soon as possible," he said.

The psychiatrist joked that the content of his sessions had changed so drastically, he was considering taking a class in economics.

"Before the plan, it was the usual talk of sex, love, careers, shyness, and insecurities. Now at least 70 per cent of the time my clients talk about the economic plan," he said.

Rio analyst Jorge Alberto Costa e Silva said the middle-class may have been harder hit than the rich.

"Twenty per cent of \$1,000 is nothing, while 20 per cent of \$1 million can go a long way toward easing the pain," he said, referring to the limit on money market withdrawals.

Costa e Silva, who in May assumes the presidency of the Geneva-based World Association of Psychiatry, said the middle-class was "orphaned" by Collor's measures.

"Bank savings gave many people the opportunity to dream, to make plans for the future. That's been taken away and for many in the middle-class, life now means only eating, working, and going to bed," he said.

The analysts said he knew of at least 10 suicide attempts that were related to desperation caused by the plan, a number he called "frighteningly high."

Wealthy Brazilians with AIDS are having an especially difficult time dealing with the bank freeze.

HOROSCOPE

FORECAST FOR SATURDAY APRIL 21, 1990

By Thomas S. Pierson, Astrologer, Carroll Righter Foundation

GENERAL TENDENCIES: A really great day when you can start fresh to think-out what you want from life and when others will be interested in hearing about your pioneering plans and new decisions.

ARIES: (March 21 to April 19) You can easily discuss with partners how to accept an opportunity to forge ahead but soon your ideas go off on a tangent and you need to be reticent.

TAURUS: (April 20 to May 20) You will find work can go along easily by pitching in as it is the day opens but later you want to make some changes which would be most unwise.

GEMINI: (May 21 to June 21) Early this morning make appointments for the good times that you wish in the future, then use care in committing yourself to expensive pleasures.

MOON CHILDREN: (June 22 to July 21) You can arrange to have more harmony in your home in the morning but in the evening don't let anything connected with an influential man cause problems.

LEO: (July 22 to August 21) Think about what you can do to gain more support in the morning from usual companions but later don't try to get them to enter into a new project with you.

VIRGO: (August 22 to September 22) Whatever you can do to enhance value or appearance of your

property should be done early for later you find extra expenses could be prohibited.

LIBRA: (September 23 to October 22) You can early get yourself in the pink of condition by attention to your own needs but later a partner with inflated sense of worth can distress you.

SCORPIO: (October 23 to November 21) Private goals can be reached early by concentrating upon them so get them behind you early so you will be able to coast along later in the day.

SAGITTARIUS: (November 22 to December 21) Contact a good friend early who can help you with that pet project and make quick progress together for later the opportunity vanishes.

CAPRICORN: (December 22 to January 20) Get out in the world of vocation or public affairs early and make your mark with them but later a secret worry can keep you from accomplishment.

AQUARIUS: (January 21 to February 19) Many new ideas flash through your mind early that are very good for you to pursue so don't loiter but get at them for later demanding friend takes your time.

PISCES: (February 20 to March 20) Put into motion early whatever you have agreed to do for your mate and then you would be wise to be exact in handling any and all obligations.

Third World worried by focus of trade talks

PUERTO VALLARTA, Mexico (R) — Officials of more than 30 nations meeting here to discuss trade liberalisation share a negotiating table and standardised name tags, but some Third World nations say their development needs are being assigned a back seat.

"The issues of vital importance for the survival of the economies of the developing countries have not made sufficient progress at this time," Thailand's Krik-Krai Jirapaet, told Reuters Thursday.

The Thai deputy director general for foreign trade said progress in the current round of trade talks under the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) has been "lopsided" in favour of the developed countries.

He said issues such as banking services and patent and copyright guarantees have been pushed into the spotlight because of their importance to countries like the United States.

Consensus still appears far away on the issues of textiles and agriculture — both essential to many nations in the developing world — at the discussion sessions at this Pacific resort.

The nearly 100 members of the GATT are set to conclude the current round of talks, known as the Uruguay round, by December in Brussels, but officials almost universally acknowledge progress has been painfully slow.

The Thai official said negotiations are severely hampered by disputes between the world's wealthy nations, such as the stand-off between the United States and the European Community (EC) over farm subsidies.

"It's time for the major players to show some of their cards," he said, adding that "in order to have a successful round they've got to come up with something."

Some of the world's less industrialised economies say they are eager to join a global trading system, but argue they are being asked to make concessions without guarantees of trade benefits.

Many of those countries are struggling to service enormous foreign debts after a decade of severe economic setbacks and desperately need a healthy trade balance.

They would like the GATT to do away with attitudes one delegate described as more suitable for a "rich man's club" than an

international trade organisation. An Argentine trade official said the delays are especially worrisome for countries in the process of integrating themselves into world trade after years of protectionist policies.

"In general, in the issues which are of serious concern to the Latin American countries we have fallen behind," said Wylian Otrepa, Argentina's director general for multilateral affairs.

Developing countries are home to infant industries, especially in the area of services, that must be allowed to mature before they are forced to compete with better equipped trading partners, he said.

U.S. and EC officials have described as largely baseless complaints of skewed priorities made by developing nations, articulated earlier this month in a statement signed by some GATT members.

"Even if I understand some of their concerns, I think... oversimplifying them in a sharp opposition between developed on the one hand and developing on the other is simply not justified," EC Commission Vice-President Frans Andriessen told delegates.

Japanese investment flow to Asia seen undiminished

TOKYO (R) — Recent drops in the value of the yen and in Tokyo share prices will slow but not stop the flood of Japanese investment that is transforming much of Asia into an economic powerhouse, economists and traders said.

As Japanese firms globalise their operations, they are transferring production to other Asian countries, while Japan is increasingly replacing the U.S. as a market for Asian exports.

But this shift has been selective. North Korea, Burma and the three countries of Indochina are excluded from the new Asian economic club, and China is still not a full member.

Official figures show that in the first half of the 1989 financial year, which ended last month, Japan invested \$30.8 billion overseas, against 47 billion a year before.

Asia accounts for about 12 per cent of the total, or about 20 per cent of manufacturing investment alone.

Kenji Numata, a regional planning manager for Asia and Oceania at Mitsubishi Corporation said the drop in the yen, which has lost 20 per cent of its value against the dollar over the last year, might have a short-term effect on the investment flow but the fundamental trend would not change.

Takaaki Saito, general manager of the Asia and Oceania department at Marubeni Corporation, said no-one expected the yen to remain at the current level for a long time.

"Japan's role will be providing capital, technology, management

and knowhow," Saito said. "ASEAN (Association of South East Asian Nations) and later west Asia will produce textiles, light industry and machinery and the NICs (Newly Industrialised Countries) higher-technology items."

The NICs are South Korea, Taiwan, Singapore and Hong Kong.

This division of labour in an integrated Asian economy is in part a result of the flood of Japanese investment into Asia after the plaza accord of September 1985 when the seven major industrial countries agreed to revalue the yen.

Japanese firms invested more in other Asian countries in 1986-88 than in the whole 1951-1980 period, as they escaped rising domestic costs and avoided worsening U.S.-Japan trade friction by exporting to America from elsewhere in Asia.

"The world is developing into three markets, the United States, Europe, and Japan and East Asia," said Gorota Kume, a senior economist at the Export-Import Bank of Japan. "Firms will move to produce in markets where the demand is."

Numata said big companies were setting up headquarters in each of three regions, with considerable autonomy and their own research and development capability.

Japan's Asian investment first went to the NICs and Thailand and is spreading into Malaysia, Philippines and Indonesia, all of which set policies to attract Japanese capital.

Indochina, Latin America, the Middle East and Africa also sought Japanese investment but have received little.

The NICs are losing their appeal to manufacturers because of realignments of their currencies against the U.S. dollar, labour shortages, less docile workers and the loss of preferential U.S. tariff treatment.

But their rapid economic growth and rising living standards are attracting Japanese investment in property, hotels, banking and department stores.

Saito said that, over the next decade, India and Bangladesh would be recipients of investment, with Thailand and Malaysia becoming NICs and the existing NICs becoming similar to Japan, which will meanwhile become an over growing market for their goods.

Kumo discounted the idea that Asia could form an economic grouping similar to the European Community (EC) that Japan could fall back on if EC and U.S. protectionism kept out its goods.

"The population of prosperous Asian countries is small. The European and American markets cannot be neglected," he said. "While trade in this region will grow, such as Asian option is not practical."

Indochina continues to be excluded, despite attempts by Vietnam and Laos to attract foreign investment, while the U.S.-led Western boycott of Hanoi remains in place.

"Japanese official aid to Vietnam has been suspended since 1979," Kumo said.

AMMAN EXCHANGE RATES

Thursday, April 19, 1990

Central Bank official rates

	Buy	Sell	French franc	119.0	119.7
U.S. dollar	669.0	673.0	Japanese yen (for 100)	424.5	427.0
Pound Sterling	1096.8	1103.4	Dutch guilder	335.1	337.2
Deutschmark	399.7	402.1	Swedish crown	109.9	110.6
Swiss franc	451.5	454.2	Italian lira (for 100)	24.5	24.8
			Belgian franc (for 10)	193.1	194.3

LONDON EXCHANGE RATES

LONDON (R) — Following are the buying and selling rates for leading world currencies and gold against the dollar at midday on the London foreign exchange and bullion markets Friday.

One Sterling	1.6415/25	U.S. dollar	
One U.S. dollar	1.1615/25	Canadian dollar	
	1.6815/20	Deutschmark	
	1.8920/25	Dutch guilders	
	1.4835/45	Swiss francs	
	34.81/86	Belgian francs	
	5.6475/6525	French francs	
	1235/1240	Italian lire	
	157.48/58	Japanese yen	
	6.0960/1010	Swedish crowns	
	6.5305/55	Norwegian crowns	
	6.4000/50	Danish crowns	
One ounce of gold	376.60/377.00	U.S. dollars	

WORLD STOCK MARKETS

By Reuters

SYDNEY — The share market ended the week slightly easier after a day of directionless trading and thin volumes. The All Ordinaries Index ended 3.0 down at 1492.2.

TOKYO — Share prices closed broadly down but off their lows on pre-weekend selling and profit-taking reinforced by uncertainty over the yen. The Nikkei index closed 109.97 down at 29,835.44.

HONG KONG — Hong Kong's blue chip stocks gauge, down nearly 30 points in mid-morning trade, rebounded ahead of the close on European buying. The Hang Seng Index closed 0.37 lower at 3,067.50, well above the day's low.

SINGAPORE — Prices ended the day weaker across the board on light liquidation by institutions and local small investors in thin and dull trading. The Straits Times Industrial Index retreated 8.46 to 1,520.56.

BOMBAY — Share prices rose sharply in brisk new account trading, despite higher contango (carry-forward) charges. The Bombay Stock Exchange Index shot up 28.21 points to 787.36.

FRANKFURT — West German share prices ended slightly higher, but off the highs of the day, with market activity mostly restricted to position squaring ahead of the weekend. The 30-share Dax Index rose 5.46 points to 1,884.33.

ZURICH — Gains in industrial shares were countered by slight losses in banks and insurance. The All-Share SPI Index closed 3.1 points higher at 1,070.

PARIS — Foreign buying pushed blue chip higher. Suez was up 6.50 francs in the morning to 497.50. Peugeot rose five to 804.

LONDON — British coal pension funds offered £1.03 billion for Glode Investment. The first bid of the year for an FTSE-100 company. But the index was nudged only slightly higher and closed up 2.4 at 2,187.1.

NEW YORK — Soft bond prices held down shares. At 1637 GMT the Dow Jones industrials were 3.28 points lower at 2,708.56.

THE Daily Crossword by Diane C. Baldwin

ACROSS

- 1 Took off
- 5 He loved Rose
- 9 El —, TX
- 13 Wander
- 14 Part of a word
- 16 Bone cavities
- 17 Innocent one
- 20 Lukewarm
- 21 Cattle
- 22 Rough trip
- 23 Elevator man
- 25 Moves like
- 27 Expand
- 30 Have being
- 31 Heavy metal
- 32 Redames' beloved
- 35 Pointer
- 39 Grain morsel
- 40 License
- 42 Before for
- 43 Military student
- 45 Skidded
- 46 Layered mineral
- 47 Permit
- 49 Lhasa native
- 51 Respires
- 56 Muse number
- 57 Merit
- 58 Fruit drinks
- 60 Water wheel
- 63 Faithless
- 66 Solution
- 67 Tiny particle
- 68 Upon
- 69 Blatant or
- 70 Plants
- 71 Layers

DOWN

- 1 Col. gp.
- 2 Earring site
- 3 Disappear
- 4 Charged
- 6 Onassis to
- 8 Chime sound
- 7 Bits
- 9 Ms Merman
- 9 Touch
- 10 One more
- 11 Cache
- 12 Command
- 16 Inquiries
- 18 Revise texts
- 19 Director Kazan
- 24 Cicatrix
- 26 Mine car
- 27 Spill over
- 28 River duck
- 29 Hurries
- 33 State: abbr.
- 34 Mine entrance
- 36 Say over
- 37 Killer whale
- 38 Detach from
- 40 Dependence
- 41 Lend
- 41 Norse god
- 44 Obliterated
- 46 Certain
- 48 Candelabrum
- 49 Bangkok native
- 50 A Crosby
- 51 Finest
- 52 Indian queens
- 53 Lyric muse
- 54 Farber and
- 55 Printer
- 55 Frances
- 59

Millwall seeks to sink Villa's fading title hope

LONDON (R) — Millwall, already relegated from the first division, plan to sink Aston Villa's fast-fading English soccer championship hopes Saturday.

The London club, the first to take the plunge, notched up their last league win against second-placed Villa at the den in December and are keen for a repeat performance to end the season with a flourish and impress new manager Bruce Rioch.

"Over the years we have a fairly good record against Villa," said Millwall defender Alan McLeary. "So if we go there with the right attitude we could surprise them again."

"Having a new manager will also give us a bit of an extra boost. We have got Villa, Arsenal and Chelsea to play so they're three big names," he said, confident of upsetting the odds.

The match will have an added significance for Millwall fans since it will be the first time their former striker Tony Casciaro

has played his old club since moving to Villa Park for £1.5 million (\$2.4 million).

"It will be nice to see him again and another incentive for us to do well," said McLeary. "He's been playing fairly well although he's not been in the goals. Hopefully I won't see too much of him because the ball will be down the other end."

Casciaro scored when Millwall beat Villa 2-0.

Leaders Liverpool, two points clear of Villa with one game in hand and the championship within their grasp, could be without their Ireland international midfielder Ronnie Whelan for the home game against sixth-placed Chelsea.

Whelan limped off during Liverpool's 1-1 draw at champions Arsenal Wednesday and remains doubtful.

Manager Kenny Dalglish, whose team only needs eight points to clinch an unprecedented 15th league title, also has to decide on the condition of Eng-

land striker Peter Beardsley and Scotland defender Gary Gillespie before naming his squad.

Manchester United, finally free of relegation worries and with an F.A. Cup final to look forward to, visit fourth-placed Tottenham for what promises to be a game to remember.

Mark Robins, scorer of six goals in the last six games, has recovered from a calf-strain and starts the match.

"The players are enjoying their games after taking a lot of stick at one period. They are probably wishing the season could go on for another three months," said manager Alex Ferguson.

Derech expect to have England goalkeeper Peter Shilton back in action for the game with Norwich after a thumb injury ruled him out of Monday's 2-1 defeat at Everton.

At the bottom of the division, Luton could be relegated if they lose to Arsenal and Sheffield Wednesday pick up a point at Queen's Park Rangers.

Ballesteros slumps in Spanish tournament

MADRID, Spain (AP) — Five players shot 67s Thursday to share the first-round lead in the Madrid Open, while defending champion Seve Ballesteros slumped to a 76 and was tied for 128th place.

The leaders, all at 5-under par, were Australians Mike Harwood and Rodger Davis, Spaniards Miguel Angel Jimenez and Jose Rivero, and American Rick Hartmann.

Six other players shot 4-under par 68s to share sixth place on the 6,981-yard Puerto de Hierro course.

Ballesteros, Spain's top golfer, complained that he and his pregnant wife, Carmen, were continually harassed by a horde of Spanish photographers. His wife left the course before Ballesteros had finished his round, which included two double bogeys.

Hartmann, who was born in New York state and now makes his home in London, broke par on all four of the course's par-5 holes.

He knocked in a 30-foot putt for an eagle on the 530-yard 18th, which he reached with a driver and a 3-iron.

"The winds were really with me today," said the 31-year-old Hartmann, whose best previous finish in six years on the tour was a second place in the Lawrence Batley International in 1985. "I had never played this course before where I could get on the par-5s in two."

Jimenez, 25, regarded as one of the rising young stars on the PGA European tour, birdied his first two holes on his way to a 33 on the front nine.

All-women crew stirs up Whitbread race

FORT LAUDERDALE, Florida (AP) — The first all-female crew in the Whitbread Round the World Yacht Race is conquering sexism along with icebergs, thunderstorms and 50-foot (15-metre) waves.

The Maiden, a 58-foot (17.7-metre) yacht skippered by Tracy Edwards of Great Britain, outraced all other boats in its class during two legs of the prestigious, 32,932-nautical mile race, winning two coveted beefeater trophies.

"Starting the race was great — a real kick in the eye for all the people who said we couldn't do it," Edwards said. "Everyone was thinking 'I hope they get round in one piece.' We were thinking, 'God, I hope we win this.'"

Edwards is a 27-year-old professional sailor who lives not far from Southampton, England, where the race began last September.

"I found some people's attitudes just frighteningly ignorant," she said. "Marketing men would say, 'a bunch of women sailing around the world, how bloody stupid. What if they all die?'"

Edwards, who began sailing at 17, said her all-female crew is the focus of attention in this year's Whitbread race.

"If we get beaten by another boat we won't be ashamed of it," she said. "They push their boats to the limit to stay in front of us."

Maiden, which finished the

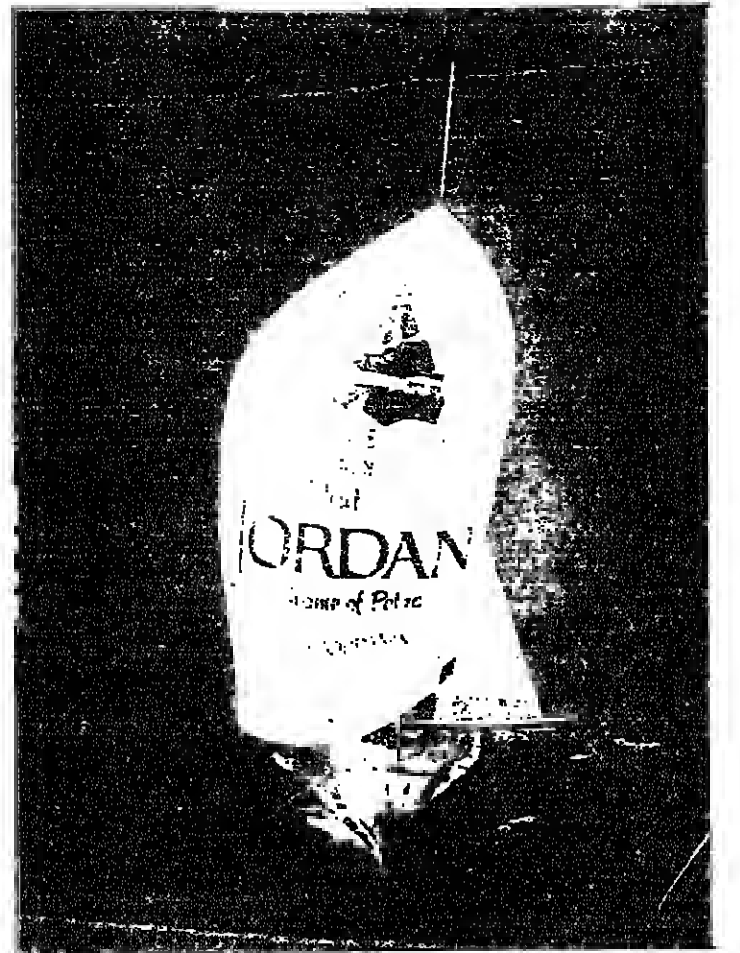
5,475 nautical-mile (10,140-kilometre) leg from Punta Del Este, Uruguay, last Saturday ranks third among the five boats in its class. The final dash across the Gulf Stream to Portsmouth, England, begins May 5.

More than 400 women from all over the world applied for spots on the Maiden's crew. Edwards finally chose 11 from England, France, Holland, New Zealand and the United States, and got financial support from the Royal Jordanian airline.

"They felt a certain kinship with us," Edwards said. "Jordan is a small country, where women are roughly equal, battling against the odds with no natural resources."

Still, many sailors expected Maiden to trail behind the other 22 boats in the grueling race, which has taken them from England to Uruguay, east of Australia and New Zealand and around the tip of South America before stopping at Uruguay again and heading north to Fort Lauderdale, Florida.

"People said we wouldn't have the strength. And once we proved that wrong, they said we'd never get along," Edwards said. "But after you stay together for 33,000 miles (53,000 kilometres) and you trust your life to 11 other people, it's pretty difficult not to get on. We have our arguments, but it's over in five minutes. It has to be — you can't live with a grudge on a boat."



The Maiden sailing on high seas

Edwards and her crew share spartan quarters on the Maiden, sleeping in four-hour shifts in fold-down bunks. The boat is built for speed and stripped of any non-essential items, like a refrigerator. The crew eats nothing but freeze-dried food on the ocean.

"It's the most time I've ever spent with a bunch of women," said Dawn Riley of Detroit, a watch leader on the Maiden and the only U.S. woman in the race.

"I don't think we started out to prove anything," said Riley, who wants to sail for the U.S. Olympic team after the Whitbread. "We already knew we could sail on a par with men. We just had to let them know."

The women proved their mettle on the frigid southern ocean, where yachts rode 50-foot (15 metre) waves and dodged icebergs, whales nearly punctured the bows of two boats, and ice covered the decks of the fleet. "I've been anxious a couple of

times, but I've never actually been frightened," Edwards said. "When everyone's shouting and running around, gathering sails, you haven't got time to be frightened. You're fighting for your life."

Edwards says success in the Whitbread has nothing to do with gender.

"It's how professional your team and crew are," she said. "The race is half won before you cross the starting line."

Still, the Maiden sailors are not above flaunting their femininity. Just before arriving to thousands of fans in Fort Lauderdale Saturday, they traded their faded uniforms for swimsuits and posed for the crowds.

"We never wanted to be male clones," Edwards said. "We're women and enjoy sailing — that doesn't mean you need to be macho. I didn't want people to think we're big, hunking gorillas. I wanted to prove that anyone can enjoy sailings."

Jugoplastika wins European basketball Champions Cup

ZARAGOZA, Spain (AP) — Jugoplastika defeated F.C. Barcelona 72-67 Thursday to win its second straight European Champions Cup basketball title.

Guard Toni Kucok's 20 points paced the Yugoslavs, who took the lead five minutes into the game and withstood a late surge by Barcelona.

The key to Jugoplastika's win was converting Barcelona's 10 lost balls and making fewer mistakes in its offensive play. Barce-

lona made only 22 of 53 shots from the field, or 41 per cent.

Earlier in the day, Limoges of France defeated Aris Salonika 103-91 to take third place in the final four tournament.

Limoges's American forwards, Don Collins and Michael Brooks, pumped in 26 points as did centre Stephane Ostrowski, who also had 15 rebounds.

The French team dominated the Greeks despite a 43-point

performance by star guard Nikos Galis and 29 points from American forward Mike Jones. The first half ended with Limoges ahead 54-51. Aris led briefly only once, in the first five minutes of the game.

In the championship game, Jugoplastika led Barcelona for most of the second half, jumping out to a 59-50 lead. But Barcelona charged back to even at 59-59 with a three-pointer by Ignacio Solozabal with 6:13 left.

World champion Le Moignan beaten in British Open squash

LONDON (R) — Martine Le Moignan, the reigning world champion, was eliminated by English compatriot Suzanne Horner

in the third round of the British Open squash championships Thursday.

Fourth seed Le Moignan,

beaten finalist last year, lost 4-9, 9-5, 6-9, 9-5, 9-3 to 12th-seeded Horner, who has now defeated the world champion three times this season.

Horner, who advances to the quarter-finals, beat Le Moignan in the semifinals of the British National championships in December and the final of the East of England Open in February.

Le Moignan appeared to have overcome the Horner jinx when she led by two games to one and 4-0 in the fourth. But she tired rapidly as Horner struck back to win the match in 34 minutes.

The defeat ended a remarkable run by Le Moignan, who had reached at least the quarter-finals of the British Open every year since 1980.

In Saturday's quarter-finals Horner will play Australian sixth seed Robyn Lambourne, who beat Babette Hoogendoorn of the Netherlands 9-7, 9-4, 9-5.

Top-seeded New Zealander Susan Devoy, who is aiming to win the British Open title for the seventh year in succession, world number nine Rebecca Best of Ireland in just 28 minutes.

World number three Lisa Opie, who has been a beaten finalist at the British Open on four occasions, recovered from the brink of defeat to beat English compatriot Sue Wright, ranked 15 places below her on the world ranking list.

Milan, Napoli appear headed for a playoff

MILAN, Italy (AP) — A.C. Milan and Napoli appeared headed for a rare Italian league title playoff, tied at 47 points with only two games left.

In Sunday's penultimate round of the 34-round championship, the two league leaders play difficult away matches.

Victory is their only option. If Napoli and Milan end the regular season with the same number of points overall, the league title will be decided by a playoff on a neutral field.

"At this point we must think of picking up four points out of the two last matches. Any other result would mean the loss of the title," said Milan's manager, Arrigo Sacchi.

Milan, which had some extra work Wednesday night when it fought Bayern Munich to earn a berth in the final of the Champions Cup, appears more tired

than Napoli, which has been long eliminated from European Cup play.

"But Milan team officials said the prospect of achieving an unprecedented 'grand slam' of soccer, including prize money, should provide incentive and stamina."

Milan, winner of Intercontinental Cup last December, is in the running for the league title, the Cup of Champions and the Cup of Italy.

The only title playoff in Italy's soccer history dates to 1964, when Bologna defeated Internazionale of Milan.

Sunday, Milan plays Verona, which is struggling to avoid relegation to the second division, while Napoli faces Bologna, a team hungry for points to gain a

berth in next season's UEFA Cup.

GOREN BRIDGE

WITH OMAR SHARIF
& TAMMAM HIRSH
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WEEKLY BRIDGE QUIZ

Q.1—As South, vulnerable, you hold:

♠107652 ♣AQ5 ♦A63 ♣7
The bidding has proceeded:
South West North East
1 ♣ Pass 2 ♣ Pass

What do you bid now?

Q.2—Neither vulnerable, as South you hold:

♠Q109753 ♣QJ93 ♦7 ♣K6
The bidding has proceeded:
West North East South
3 ♣ Pass Pass ?

What action do you take?

Q.3—Neither vulnerable, as South you hold:

♠J84 ♣Q10874 ♦8 ♣AK64
The bidding has proceeded:
North East South West
1 ♣ Dbl ?

What action do you take?

Q.4—Both vulnerable, as South you hold:

♠A3 ♣AJ86 ♦K43 ♣KQ42
Partner opens the bidding with three diamonds. What do you respond?

Q.5—Neither vulnerable, as South you hold:

♠K65 ♣6 ♦9732 ♣AQ643
The bidding has proceeded:
West North East South
1 ♣ 2 ♣ 3 ♣ ?

What action do you take?

Q.6—As South, vulnerable, you hold:

♠KJ10432 ♣A96 ♦103 ♣92
The bidding has proceeded:
West North East South
1 NT Pass Pass ?

What action do you take?

Look for answers on Monday.

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CRAZY LEGS

Performances: 3:30, 8:30, 10:30

Cinema **PHILADELPHIA** Tel: 634144

Yahia Al Fakhrani
& Safiyya Al Omar
in
AI Burkan
(The Volcano)
(Arabic)

Performances: 3:30, 8:30, 10:30

Cinema **NIJOUN** Tel: 675571

Farid Shawqi, Suhair
Ramzi, Farouq Al Fishawi
in
THE SERVANT
(Arabic)

Performances: 3:30, 8:30, 10:30
Friday & Sunday extra show at 11:00 a.m.

Cinema **PLAZA** Tel: 699238

BILOXI BLUES

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Ceasefire takes effect in Nicaragua

Contras sign accord to disarm

MANAGUA (AP) — Despite a pact to disband the contras, President Daniel Ortega said Nicaraguans can't be sure their 9-year-old civil war is over until the last rebel lays down his gun.

The contras signed an accord Thursday with the United Nations to begin turning in their weapons next Wednesday, the day the 14-party bloc and President-elect Violeta Barrios de Chamorro are to take office.

The contras are to give up all of their arms by June 10, and all sides agreed to a ceasefire that went into effect at noon Thursday.

There has been widespread speculation the Sandinista government might not transfer power as pledged — despite its loss in Feb. 25 elections — if the contras did not disarm.

The situation has created an atmosphere of mutual suspicion, and Ortega appealed for trust.

"We still can't say that peace has arrived, but we can say today that we are much closer to peace and are distancing ourselves from war," he said after a meeting with Bernard Aronson, the U.S. Assistant Secretary of State for Inter-American Affairs.

"The war will have disappeared on the moment that all the contras have disarmed, and the deadline is June 10," he said.

Aronson made no comments during his one-day visit to Man-

agua, except when he came out of Mrs. Chamorro's home and told reporters the two had discussed "economics, the transition, the peace process" and "the economic assistance thing."

U.S. President George Bush has asked Congress to approve \$300 million in aid to help Mrs. Chamorro revive Nicaragua's battered economy.

An estimated 30,000 people were killed by the civil war in this country of 3 million. There are about 9,000 contras in Nicaragua.

They waged their insurgency against the Sandinistas from Honduran border camps and with U.S. aid. But the United States cut off military aid in February 1988, the fighting tapered to sporadic battles and most of the rebels have slipped back into the country.

Mrs. Chamorro and Ortega had asked them to disband. "I'm very happy. We don't want any more, we want peace, we want reconciliation," she said after meeting with Aronson. "Like I told Daniel (Ortega) yesterday... all of us have to give each other a helping hand, forgive."

Following 14 hours of talks, the contras, the Sandinista-controlled

army, UNO officials and Roman Catholic Cardinal Miguel Obando Y Bravo of Managua signed the accord.

The agreement also calls for Sandinista military forces to complete their withdrawal from five rebel security zones and for the guerrillas to begin concentrating immediately in those areas.

Another agreement between the Sandinista army and the Misquito Indian rebels, who are allied with the contras, established a ceasefire that started at midnight Thursday in the sparsely populated eastern half of Nicaragua. It calls for the demobilisation of the Indian rebel force by May 18.

Missions of the United Nations and Organisation of American States (OAS) were charged with supervising the accords.

The incoming UNO government seemed to gain the most. The Sandinistas had threatened general strikes and other actions if the contras did not demobilise by inauguration day, and there was always the threat of armed clashes and even renewed civil war.

Earlier, the contras had demanded the Sandinista army be neutralised as a condition for disbanding their forces.

Thursday's accords do not address that demand. However, under an accord with Mrs. Chamorro's coalition, the Sandinistas had already agreed to demobilise the army and reduce its size. In

exchange, the incoming government promised to "respect the integrity and professionalism" of the armed forces.

The fears of disruption in the transfer of power have hinged largely on whether the army would be willing to yield authority to the new government.

"With this accord, we conclude the peace process that started with the elections," said Antonio Lacayo, senior negotiator for Mrs. Chamorro.

"Let it be clear that what has been signed here is something serious, something formal, and I think that we all have the good will to fulfill this signed document," said Oscar Sovallbaro, the contras' senior negotiator.

Sandinista army Gen. Humberto Ortega, the defence minister and brother of the president, said he was satisfied with what he called a peace effort reached "in profound, serious way, with a great spirit of responsibility."

However, not all Sandinistas were happy with the idea of letting the contras retain their arms after April 25, and a pro-Sandinista mob surrounded a U.S. embassy station wagon carrying Aronson as it was leaving the Managua airport Thursday morning.

The mob pounded on the sides and windows of the vehicle, demanding that the contras demobilise immediately. No one was reported injured.

Mitterrand puts U.S. fears on NATO commitment to rest

KEY LARGO, Florida (R) — President Francois Mitterrand returned to Paris Friday confident he has dispelled American concern about France's commitment to NATO.

He appears to have convinced President George Bush at talks in Florida Thursday that U.S. interests are not threatened by French plans for Europe to take a more assertive role in its own security.

Bush hailed Mitterrand's "enlightened long-term vision" about the future shape of the U.S.-led Western alliance and its relations with Europe's own institutions. "I think that President Mitterrand and I are very close together on the concept of NATO in the future," Bush said at a joint news conference.

The assurance was in striking contrast to the build-up to the informal talks when unidentified American officials warned through the French media that the two allies seemed to be drifting apart on their blue-prints for the new NATO (North Atlantic Treaty Organisation).

France, under General Charles

de Gaulle, pulled its forces out of the alliance's integrated command in 1966, determined to keep total control of its new nuclear arsenal.

French governments have stuck to that independent path, and in Key Largo Mitterrand ruled out any full return to NATO.

"As everyone knows, or should know, France has a specific defence policy and she intends to keep that autonomy," he said. But he took pains to dispel fears that France thought NATO, armed in 1949 at the start of the cold war, had utterly lost its purpose with the sudden decline in Soviet power.

He said the Atlantic alliance's role in maintaining Europe's defence and strategic balance was as important as ever. But NATO had to adapt to changing times, he said, adding that Bush backed his call for the 16-member alliance to hold a summit this year to chart its future.

The summit will be held after Bush and Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev discussed the

new world order in detail at a meeting scheduled for May 30 to June 3.

Mitterrand wants the new NATO to complement other alliances in Europe but stressed that the United States should retain a key role in European security discussions and endorsed the need for U.S. troops to remain in Europe.

He pushed his notion of a European confederation as a way of bringing the emerging democracies of the East into a close relationship with the Western half of the continent.

The 12-nation European Community is set to integrate economically, politically and in the security field, he said, speaking on the same day that France and West Germany made a high-profile initiative to speed up the process.

French officials denied the Franco-German initiative was timed to coincide with the Florida talks, to show Bush that Europe meant business.

Asked if he was worried by the move, Bush replied quickly: "not at all."

Colombian police foil terrorist attack on Medellin airport

BOGOTA, Colombia (AP) — Police have foiled a plan by two Spanish mercenaries to use a rocket and automatic rifles to fire on the Medellin airport, authorities said.

The rocket and the two rifles were seized Thursday during a police raid on a house across from the Medellin airport, said Gen. Hnherto Camero, the city's police chief. Camero said in a communique that the two terrorists fled the house moments before the raid.

He added that they were planning carry out "a large-scale attack, presumably against presidential candidates or aircraft."

The candidate for the opposition Conservative Party, Rodrigo Lloreda, was in Medellin Thurs-

day campaigning in advance of the May 27 elections.

In Bogota, the head of Colombia's security police, Gen. Miguel Maza, told reporters that the two Spanish mercenaries arrived in Medellin Wednesday, apparently to prepare the attack on the airport.

He did not identify the suspects but said authorities were still searching for them.

In the past, authorities have accused Spaniards belonging to the ETA, the separatist Basque group, of carrying out terrorist attacks in Colombia for drug traffickers.

Mercuraries belonging to the ETA have been implicated in two of the worst terrorist attacks by drug traffickers as part of their war against the government.

Police blame the terrorists for a bomb that exploded last Nov. 27 aboard a Colombian jetliner, killing all 107 persons aboard. On Dec. 6, a car bomb targeting the security police headquarters killed 63 persons and wounded some 1,000. ETA members made the device, police said.

Last week, terrorists working for the Medellin cartel exploded a car bomb on a busy Medellin highway, killing 20 persons.

The attacks were in retaliation for a government antidrug campaign, now in its eighth month.

In an unrelated event, six leftist guerrillas were killed in a battle with a special army brigade created to fight the rebels. The deaths brought to 28 the number of rebels killed by the brigade in its first two weeks in operation.

Talk of Indo-Pakistan war fails to faze border villagers

SUCHETGARH, India (R) — Trenchant rhetoric sparking war fears in Islamabad and Delhi seems to be having little effect on ordinary border folk on the front line.

The last time the two long-standing enemies rattled their sabres, over Indian military exercises in 1987, the prosperous Indian border village of Suchetgarh was evacuated along with many others in the area.

But Friday, Suchetgarh's children were playing cricket and flying kites, the women chatted by the well as usual and the men were relaxed despite the war fever.

"I don't think there is going to be a war. We will think about what to do when it happens," said tailor Ramesh Lal.

"We are not going anywhere. We are going to stay put," said another villager.

In 1987, war fever struck at the same time of year, just as crops were ready for harvest. Villagers were evacuated to temporary camps further from the border and farmers had to sell their harvest quickly and cheaply.

This year's harvest begins in less than two weeks, and farmers

are busy preparing for it. They said they were worried about a repeat of 1987, but there was no panic.

"We are not under instructions to bury the harvesting," said farmer Ramesh Chander.

The charges flying between Delhi and Islamabad over possible preparations for a fourth war stem from an anti-Indian uprising in the Kashmir Valley, where 300 people have been killed since mid-January.

Two of the previous wars have been fought over Kashmir, and Delhi accuses Pakistan of arming and training Kashmiri Muslim militants in the one-third of the Himalayan region it controls. Islamabad denies the charge.

Each has accused the other of moving troops to the border, but Western diplomats in Delhi say they have seen no signs yet of offensive military preparations.

Suchetgarh had a first taste of trouble last month when several thousand Pakistanis tried to march across the frontier to demonstrate support for the Kashmiri militants.

Paranilitary troops of the bor-

der security force (BSF) opened fire and killed at least four.

But no more incidents have occurred in the area and villagers have relaxed again.

"We don't feel any war atmosphere here and we are not worried because the BSF is there," said Son Prakash Sharma.

Nevertheless, the BSF has imposed a dusk-to-dawn curfew in an area where villagers from both sides of the border fence can normally talk to each other.

Under the gaze of the BSF from its watch towers, that is not happening these days.

Bangladeshi protest

Meanwhile in Dhaka, about 5,000 Bangladeshi Muslims demonstrated Friday to protest at what they call the occupation of Kashmir by India and the occupation of Arab lands by Israel.

The protests were jointly organised by the Islami Constitution Movement and a pro-Iranian group.

Bangladeshi fundamentalists have staged rallies almost daily recently to protest at what they call genocide by India in Kashmir and pro-Islam support for a bloody secessionist campaign.

E. German communists pledge constructive opposition

EAST BERLIN (R) — East Germany's once all-powerful Communists pledged Friday constructive opposition to the country's new conservative-led government.

Gregor Gysi, leader of the Party of Democratic Socialism (PDS), said his party supported many of the policies unveiled by Christian Democratic Prime Minister Lothar de Maiziere Thursday.

The PDS, a reformed version of the Communist Party driven out of office in a peaceful revolution last year, is the largest opposition group in the East German parliament which emerged from last month's first free elections.

De Maiziere had made it clear that in negotiating unification with West Germany, East Germany would not meekly accept terms dictated by Bonn.

"We welcome your apparent intention to lead a sovereign government," Gysi said during a parliamentary debate that produced fiery exchanges and flashes of humour never seen in the old Communist rubber-stamp parliament.

"In this, you will always have our support. The PDS grouping will support everything that serves the well-being of the citizens of East Germany."

Gysi urged De Maiziere to be firm in insisting that when West Germany's powerful mark replaces the virtually worthless East German mark, the conversion should take place at the rate of one-to-one.

Gysi firmly rejected De Maiziere's plan to choose the road to unification favoured by Bonn, under which East Germany would simply become part of the West German Federal Republic.

Gysi said this would give East Germans an inferiority complex.

130 countries to celebrate Earth Day

TWENTY years after the environmental movement was launched, 130 countries Sunday will mark Earth Day with parades and protests calling attention to garbage in Japan, rain forests in Brazil and pollution everywhere.

At the United Nations in New York, 42 astronauts from 14 countries will participate in celebrations to include displays of Earth photos taken from space 20 years ago and others taken recently. The effects of pollution, oil drilling and tree felling are clear.

A transmission from the Soviet space station Mir will be projected on a large screen.

At the Washington D.C., Zoo, elephants will trample aluminum cans to promote recycling. In Eger, Hungary, there will be a parade of people dressed as trees and birds, and in Kazakhstan people will wear gas masks to protest auto emissions.

British shoppers are being asked to return unnecessary and wasteful packaging to grocery stores for recycling.

In the Himalayas, climbers from the United States, Soviet Union and China have set Earth Day as their target for reaching the summit of Mount Everest. They will collect garbage from their expeditions during the climb.

Earth Day will last a week in the Gulf. Exhibitions, lectures and other activities aimed at heightening awareness of the dangers of polluting the Gulf with offshore oil rigs and coastal industries.

Gaylord Nelson, a former U.S. senator who founded the first Earth Day in 1970, said this year's celebration is likely to be "the largest grassroots demonstration in history."

Nelson, a councillor to the Wilderness Society, said it should create public uproar that "shakes the political leadership of the world out of its lethargy and forces it to deal with global environmental problems."

Japan will celebrate Earth Day for the first time. Events will include a festival on Yumenoshima, or "dream island," in Tokyo Bay. The island was built on landfill, mainly garbage from Tokyo.

Denis Hayes, international chairman of Earth Day, said on a recent visit to Tokyo that Japan was "in a league almost with the United States in being viewed as an environmental outlaw, perhaps even more so because of its dependence on resources from overseas."

Saving the Brazilian rain forests from development will be a major theme worldwide.

The Japan Tropical Forest Action Network plans a "rock for the Rain Forest" concert to publicise Japan's position as the leading importer of wood from tropical rain forests.

In Budapest, Hungary, ecologists will give the Brazilian embassy a coffin filled with sawdust to protest the killing of the Amazon forests.

In Britain, Friends of the Earth will tell people that massive Third World foreign debt contributes to destruction of rain forests. The environmental group is pushing for debt relief.

Other activities worldwide will include:

— France: Formation of a human chain of 500,000 people along the Loire River that will stretch about 840 kilometres.

— Hungary: In Vac, a dirty sphere symbolising the Earth will be rolled into the main square and washed clean.

— The Netherlands: Environmental groups will protest highways under construction and proposed tunnels to bisect the Amsterdam-Rotterdam corridor.

— Ireland: Parades in Dublin and 10 other cities are planned.

— Britain: The Council for Posterity launches the adopt-a-planet competition in primary and secondary schools. Students will adopt a small piece of land, making improvements and taking "before" and "after" photographs. Cash prizes will be awarded in June 1991.

— Mexico: environmentalists will march six kilometres from Zocalo to Chapultepec Park. The theme will be the four elements: Earth, wind, water and fire. A major issue is poaching and export of sea turtle eggs and skins.

— United States: In Arizona, students will plant hundreds of trees. Many communities will close streets to motorised traffic. Some chemical plants will hold open houses.

N. Koreans vote for parliament Sunday

TOKYO (R) — North Korea Sunday votes to renew its rubber-stamp parliament but political analysts are certain "great leader" Kim Il-Sung will keep his grip on real power despite speculation he could step down.

Kim, 78, who has ruled the reclusive country for 42 years, has long groomed his son, "dear leader" Kim Jong-Il, to take over.

Most North Korea analysts in Tokyo and Seoul originally intrigued when elections for the Supreme People's Assembly were advanced six months — think the time is still not ripe.

Kim gives no sign of wavering. In an open letter to voters he said he was glad to be nominated for assembly deputy.

"I will justify the deep trust and expectation of the people by faithfully serving the country and the people and devoting myself to the cause of socialism and communism," he wrote.

Analysts argue that even if the elder Kim officially retires he will still wield power behind the

scenes.

"It is doubtful whether he can readily abandon power even for his son," a spokesman for South Korea's National Unification Ministry said recently.

North Korea is one of the last hardline Communist countries and its secrecy makes accurate political predictions impossible, but Japan's Kyodo News Service reported last month from Peking Kim would step down after his birthday, which was on April 15.

It quoted Chinese government sources as saying China was informed in mid-February that Kim was about to retire from key posts and hand over the reins of power to his son.

This added fuel to the speculation sparked by Pyongyang's announcement in February of elections for the assembly which has no real power but officially elects the president. The new assembly is expected to convene around May.

North Korea faces growing international isolation after the collapse of Communist governments in Eastern Europe, and is currently involved in a bitter row with Moscow over its warmer ties with the South Korean government.

It also faces growing discontent amongst its own people over shortages of food, clothing and other items, the analysts said.

"North Koreans do not think now is a proper time for the power transfer. They want Kim Il-Sung to stay in power as long as he is in good health," said Hideshi Takesada, a Korea analyst at the Japanese Defence College.

The "great leader," whose personality cult pervades every aspect of North Korean life, is currently both general secretary of the Korean Workers (Communist) Party and state president.

The younger Kim, 48, groomed to succeed his father since the early 1970s, holds the number two post in the ruling party and

analysts say he already runs day-to-day state affairs.

"It is impossible to deny or affirm at this stage. But it is clear that (an official) power transfer in the near future is only a slim possibility," said the Seoul Unification Ministry spokesman.

North Korean journalists have been quoted by Japanese media as denying any plans by the elder Kim to quit.

"It's impossible," said one in the Korean border village of Panmunjom, quoted by Kyodo and the Sankai Shimbun newspaper. He said the assembly election was advanced so that it could quickly carry out plans outlined in Kim Il-Sung's new year address.

The Rodong Shiman, mouthpiece of the ruling party, ran an editorial saying, "The nomination of the great leader as a candidate... reflects the unshakable will of the Korean people... to follow the party and the leader to the last, weathering out any storm or stress."

Amorous ram kills Greek farmer

IRAKLION, Crete (R) — A 100-year-old Greek farmer was killed by an amorous ram after he tried to stop it mating with one of his goats. Police said Yannis Daskalakis died from stomach and head injuries caused by the ram's horns. "Nobody could get close to help him as the ram was furious," a police spokesman said.

Evicted mother told to 'buy a tent'

LONDON (R) — A homeless mother was astonished when British social security officials took her to her word and gave her money to buy a tent. Phyllis Smith, 41, appealed for help after she and her three children were evicted from their house because of rent arrears and forced to stay with relatives. "They said they couldn't help so I jokingly asked if they would pay for a tent," Smith said Thursday. "The next thing I knew the cheque had arrived." The cheque for £186 (\$305) made out to a local outdoor equipment store was accompanied by £75 (\$123) in cash to pay for air beds and camping gear. "I just can't believe it," Smith said. "Do they really expect me to camp out with my children?" A spokesman for the Department of Social Security said: "Something has clearly gone wrong."

British baron guilty of plotting theft

BIRMINGHAM, England (AP) — A British court has convicted a baron of plotting to steal from an elderly relative, but the jury continued to deliberate on similar charges against his two stepchildren. Sentence was not immediately imposed on Baron Michael de Stempel or on his ex-wife, Baroness Susan de Stempel. The 55-year-old baroness pleaded guilty to five charges of theft and two of forgery in connection with the fortune of her aunt, the late Lady Margaret Illingworth. During the nine-week trial at Birmingham Crown Court, Baroness de Stempel's two children from a former marriage, Sophia Wilberforce, 27, and Marcus Wilberforce, 28, as well as the 60-year-old baron, pleaded innocent to conspiring to steal from Lady Illingworth between January 1984 and January 1986. Prosecutor Timothy Barnes alleged they acted as a team and took "vast quantities" of her property. He said cash and goods worth £500,000 (\$820,000) were taken from the elderly woman before her death when she lived with her niece, the baroness, at their home in Docklow, central England. The jury deliberated for 11 hours before finding the baron guilty. He showed no emotion when the verdict was returned against him. The jury was to resume deliberation on the charges against Sophia and Marcus Wilberforce.

Kirov star joins U.S. ballet theatre

NEW YORK (AP) — Faruk Ruzimatov, 26, once a darling star of Leningrad's Kirov Ballet, has joined the American Ballet Theatre (ABT) in New York, the ABT has said. Ruzimatov won wide praise from dance critics when he performed in New York with the Kirov in 1987. He first danced with the American Ballet Theatre in May 1988, appearing together with Kirov ballerina Alina Astasheva in "La Bayadere." Ruzimatov also appeared with the American Ballet Theatre during its recent engagement at the Kennedy Centre in Washington and will dance with the company in its eight-week season beginning May 7.

Over 600 Danish homosexuals marry under new law

COPENHAGEN (R) — Six hundred and forty-eight Danish homosexuals entered "gay marriages" in the first three months after Denmark legalised such partnerships last Oct. 1, the National Statistics Office reported Wednesday. Four-fifths of those signing up for "registered partnerships" were men, and three-quarters live in the Copenhagen area, the office said. Denmark was the first country to pass such a law, which gives registered gay couples almost all the rights enjoyed by heterosexual marriage partners except that of adopting children. The law was passed without opposition, but leaders of the National Evangelical Lutheran Church remain divided over whether priests should bless gay marriages.